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**OLD TESTAMENT LIFE  
AND LITERATURE**



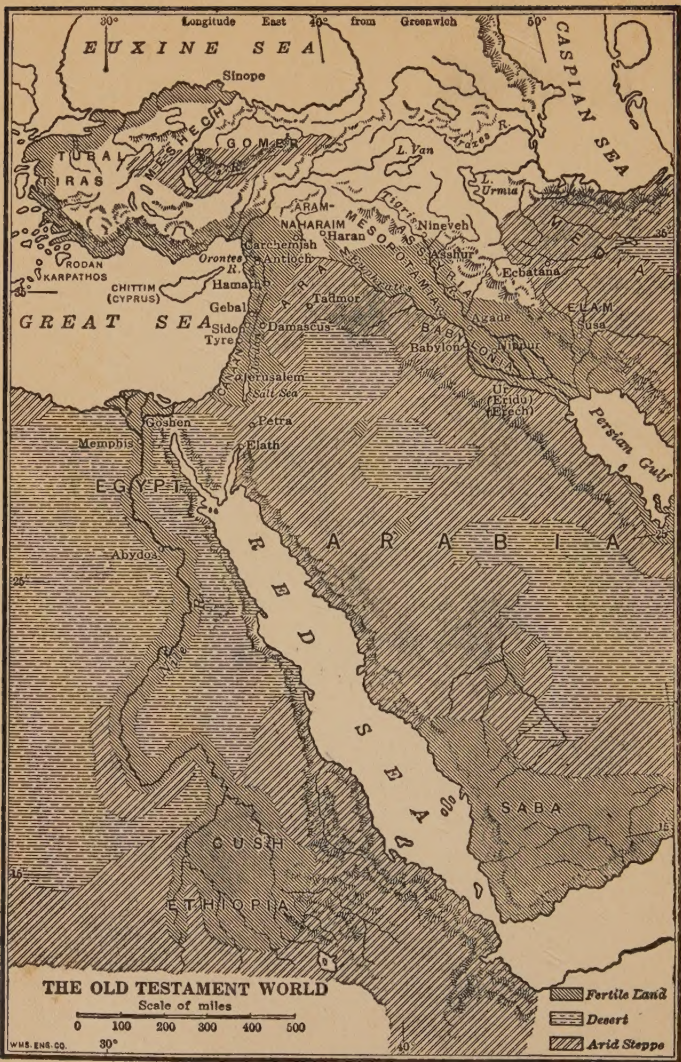
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# OLD TESTAMENT LIFE AND LITERATURE

BY

I. G. MATTHEWS

PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND EXEGESIS,  
CROZER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## PREFACE

THOSE most familiar with the Old Testament realize best that next to the New Testament, it is the most inspiring treasury of religious experience that the world possesses. Yet, it is well known that to many devout people, even among religious leaders, it is almost entirely a closed book. This is due, in part at least, to the great difficulty in gaining an adequate knowledge of the times and the conditions under which many of its messages were delivered.

To meet this need, for those who are eager to follow the story of the Old Testament revelation, this book has been prepared. History and literature are here considered together. Indeed, all phases of human activity, economic, social, philosophic and religious, are but varying expressions of the unitary life of a people; the parts of one whole.

So far as space has permitted, all those contacts, national and international, that influenced the Hebrews, have been presented as the background of the literature. It was in the midst of national travail, with its frequent tragedy and occasional triumph, that the great Old Testament leaders ever ministered, directly to their fellow men, in the realm of morals and religion.

The story of that past is a thrilling one, full of grave crises, high hopes and noble heroisms, in a very real world. The writer hopes that those ancient scenes that are so vivid to himself and that message he deems so worth-while to human life today, may become more

intelligible and more inspiring to the student, through the medium of the following pages.

I. G. MATTHEWS.

*Crozer Theological Seminary,  
Chester, Pa.  
Nov. 16th, 1922.*

**OLD TESTAMENT LIFE  
AND LITERATURE**





# OLD TESTAMENT LIFE AND LITERATURE

## CHAPTER I

### ANCIENT CIVILIZATION

THE interest of the Old Testament writers in foreign lands and peoples was very limited. Palestine, until the time of the exile, was the circumference as well as the center of their world. The smaller tribes that lay along their borders and constantly crossed their pathway, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Amalek, Syria, and Phœnicia, were well known. With these people Israel lived very much as in a family of tribes. Their boundary lines were never very distinct, and their contacts were frequently close though not always happy. On the wider horizon loomed up Egypt on the south, Babylonia and Assyria on the northeast, and in the later days Persia and Greece. China, with its civilization highly developed from before the time of Abraham, and India with its growing populations, were all but unknown. The wider the horizon, and the more distant the people, naturally the less was the interest displayed by the Scripture writers, and the more indefinite and hazy their information. This is noticeably true the farther we go back into the civilization that preceded the time of the Hebrew writers themselves.

No doubt Palestine was inhabited in very early

times. But we have every reason to believe that the garden of Eden, where the first parents of the human family lived, was not located here. Nor was the earliest civilization developed in this part of the world. Conditions in Palestine were not conducive to early permanent settlements. The Biblical narratives do not require it, while the evidences of science make it an impossibility.

*Development Sketched*—Between the first family and a settled, well-organized community, there must have intervened long centuries of development. The Old Testament does not tell the details of this story. Only reminiscences of certain links in the process are preserved in Genesis. Cain built a city; the sons of Lamech, Tubal-Cain, who was a forger of brass and iron, and Jubal, who was the inventor of musical instruments, were the accredited pioneers of civilization; Noah built an ark; and his descendants constructed the tower of Babel (Gen. iv. 17-22; vii.-xi). These sentences are but late summaries of that which took millennia of toil and struggle to accomplish, and leave vast areas for the historian to fill out.

In the beginning, human life and its relationships must have been very simple. Needs and customs were very few and primitive. As man slowly learned to master nature, his food supply increased and became more assured. With this came the larger family, then the more numerous clan, which expanded into the tribe, which still later, if the process of growth continued, became the nation. At each onward stage of growth new customs and new laws emerged, new intellectual energies were awakened, new inventions produced, and new ambitions stimulated. To reconstruct this early history from the known laws of primitive society, and from the glimpses ancient history has preserved to us, would be a fascinating task. While it would contribute much to our appreciation of the life

and the literature of the Old Testament people, most of it must be omitted in this treatment. Only in the most rapid way can we touch on some of the significant features of two great ancient civilizations that flourished before the time of Abraham, and influenced in no small measure the destinies of the Hebrew nation.

*Early Babylonian History*—Before the dawn of Palestinian history, two great neighbor nations were rising rapidly to the zenith of their culture. Babylonia, across the desert to the east, if not actually the earlier, may here first claim our attention. Lying in the southern part of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, its mild climate, well-watered and fruitful soil, invited and fostered the development of a large community. Here cities like Eridu and Ur were founded very early, followed later by others, as Larsa, Erech, and Nippur. A system of cuneiform writing, *i.e.*, various combinations of wedge shapes impressed in clay tablets, representing the various syllables of the language, was devised in very early centuries. Temple inscriptions, which many believe go back as early as 6000 B.C., have been found. Only a few of the great mounds, which indicate the location of ancient cities, have been excavated. These have yielded the partial story of the existence of thronged cities where there was the mingling of races, and the growth of wealth and splendor, which belonged to a very complex life.

Sumerians (Shinar of the O.T.), a non-Semitic people from the east, mingled with the Semites, who poured in from the Arabian desert. Each made its contribution to the amalgam, but which was the earlier, and which made the richer contribution to the later culture, is still a moot point. The Semitic in time, at least, became the dominant race. It is a long story, and somewhat clouded in obscurity. Rulers rose and fell. The exercise of their authority was measured only by their ability and ambition. The king of one

city conquered others and imposed his rule upon them. Gradually, out of the mêlée the city states arose. From that emerged the nation.

The story of life in the southern part of this valley can now be read in outline from before 4000 B.C. For over a thousand years we follow the tangled skein of growing empire till the time of Sargon I, about 2800 B.C. He extended his rule over all the Babylonian valley and sent his armies to the Mediterranean Sea on a three years' campaign. Naram-Sin, a successor, celebrated his achievements and the extent of his empire by claiming the title, "king of the four corners of the earth." For centuries, the course of empire, with its tale of slow, painful upbuilding followed by sudden collapses, took its way.

Perhaps the climax is found in the days of the Amorite king Hammurabi (2123-2081 B.C.) By this time national development had a long history. It possessed a vast inheritance of ancient custom, regulating social, industrial, and religious life. It had its hoary traditions, its legends, its myths, and philosophies. It had its well-defined caste system, ranging from the slave, who was a chattel, to the king. Inscriptions from this period abound, but none is more important than the famous code of laws found in Persia in 1901 by the French ambassador, DeMorgan. The startling resemblance of at least a score of the laws of this code to laws found in Exodus xxi.-xxiii. has illuminated the whole question of Old Testament legislation. Frequently after this period, Babylon played a very significant rôle in world history, but never had she greater luster or more importance than during this reign.

*Early Egyptian History*—Egypt was the home of the other ancient civilization. Here again a great stream, the Nile, was the fertilizing source of national development. Again the mild climate and the naturally



rich soil contributed the elements needed for its nurture. In some respects the growth of civilization in the Nile valley paralleled that of the Tigris-Euphrates. Progress in the arts and sciences was slow and toilsome, but the struggle through long centuries brought victory. Rude flint implements gave way to polished stone. Stone was supplemented in the course of time by copper and iron. Sparse populations were superseded by vast throngs. Group was united to group, and two nations, Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt, came into being. These two were welded into one in the time of Menes (cir. 3400 B.C.). Then followed the growing splendor of ancient tyrannies, the landmarks of which we know so well. The early tombs, the remnants of early masonry, the precious stones quarried in far-distant mines, the obelisks, the pyramids, the temples, the sphinx, the Tel-el-Amarna letters, and the innumerable inscriptions that have been so carefully translated, all unite to tell the story of the pomp and pride of an ancient people who played a leading, if indeed not the chief, rôle in architecture, invention, statecraft, law, letters, and religion during the two millennia preceding the dawn of Hebrew history.

*Religion*—Two illustrations will suffice to indicate their importance in the field of religion. The first is the story of the prophet Ipuwer. This man, who to us is but a “voice crying in the wilderness,” preached up and down the country that destruction must fall upon the land because of the sins and the vices of the people. Called before the Pharaoh about 1800 B.C. he declared that ruin was inevitable because of the social and political evils of the day, but that there would ultimately arise a Savior who would be “the shepherd of all the people.” We cannot fail to notice the similarity of this fragment to the tone of some of the Hebrew prophets.

Ikhnaton (1375–1358 B.C.), the heretic king, who

reigned before the days of Moses, stands out as another illustration of a peculiarly lofty ideal. He tried to introduce the worship of the one God, "the God of things as they are," into his kingdom. Quotations from one of the hymns written by this king will best indicate the quality of his thought and devotion.

How manifold are all thy works:  
 They are hidden from before us,  
 O, thou sole God, whose power no other possesseth.  
 Thou didst create the heavens according to thy  
                   desire,  
 While thou wast alone:  
 Men, all cattle large and small,  
 All that are upon the earth.

Thou art in my heart,  
 There is no other that knoweth thee  
 Save thy son Ikhnaton.  
 Thou madest him wise in thy designs  
 And in thy might. . . .

Many other illustrations might be used to indicate the culture, the religion, and the glory which these two ancient nations attained long before the days of the patriarchs. But suffice it here for us to know that in two widely separated valleys, quite independent of each other, great nations with national ambitions and hopes, with legislators and prophets, with highly developed arts and sciences, had come to maturity and occupied the world stage long before those whom we call the "elect people" had even the semblance of nationhood.

*Palestine, its Early Settlement*—Palestine lay on the highway between these two great civilizations, and could scarcely fail to have had some settlers in early days. Evidences of the existence of a race of cave-dwellers are found in many parts of the land, particu-

larly towards the south. The name Horite, perhaps meaning cave-dweller, and frequently found in the Old Testament, may preserve a reference to these people. The indications are that in far antiquity the country was occupied. Human bones have been found buried in the cave of Harajel, along with those of the woolly rhinoceros, which has been extinct throughout Syria for at least twelve thousand years.

*Amorite Immigration*—But we must come down to about 3000 B.C. before we are able to see with any degree of clearness the movements of the nations. About this time, if not earlier, Babylonian influence touched the country. This was for conquest and tribute. Later, perhaps about 2500 B.C., a wave of Semitic folk poured out of north Arabia as the result of over-population followed by drought and famine. They pressed out in two different directions. One stream flowed east down into the Euphrates valley, and in the course of time gave to Babylonia that ruling dynasty of which Hammurabi was the most renowned character. The other stream perhaps skirted the valley northward, then turning west and south, poured down into Palestine. This stream, like all migratory movements, flowed intermittently for some centuries, coming to an end perhaps about 1700 B.C. Amorite is the name that is given to both of these streams, and in the Old Testament is varied with that of Canaanite and Phœnician, according to the writer or the location. These invaders conquered and gradually assimilated the natives. The earliest wave seems to have penetrated to the sea and settled between the mountains and the Mediterranean. What race did they encounter here? Were they highly civilized? Did they conquer them or were they assimilated? Did sea-faring Cretans possess these maritime cities, Tyre and Sidon, and did their culture conquer the invader? We can only conjecture that this first wave of Amorites who settled on

the coast, and later were known as Phœnicians, must have been greatly influenced by their neighbors. They adopted the maritime life, and became traders and manufacturers.

Canaanite is the name that has been given to those who remained in the hill-country and the valleys, and became chiefly agriculturists. Their organization was but an adaptation of the tribal system. The Sheik, or petty king, ruled his own family. During the period of settlement the family bonds were enlarged and changed, so that the village or small city became the unit of government. Each village or city maintained its independence, and so strongly ingrained was the primitive tribal ideal that seldom, even under the pressure of the greatest danger, did these individual units find it possible to form a larger confederacy. Hence we are not surprised that Palestine was always ruled by some outside nation.

*Influence of Babylon*—Babylonia made frequent incursions to the Mediterranean for glory and the usual tribute. While she had no organized control of the land, and the tribute was more frequently neglected than paid, nevertheless her culture was pervasive. She was of kindred blood, had a common inheritance of law and religion, and spoke a similar language. Couriers and caravans on the highways were the purveyors of tradition as well as of commerce. Not only did the Canaanite occasionally possess a "goodly Babylonian garment," but some of the folk-lore and mythology of the Babylonian philosophers must have filtered through to these outskirts of Semitic culture.

*Egypt*—But Egypt, the nearer neighbor geographically, though not genealogically, also had interests in this narrow pathway between the desert and the sea. The southern border was always more or less open to her, and not infrequently did Egypt exact tribute of her neighbor. When in 1580 B.C. Egypt was able to

free herself from the yoke of the Hyksos, that Semitic invader who had ruled her for one hundred years, she essayed the conquest of Palestine. With a strong hand, by many triumphant campaigns, she proved her lordship, and for two centuries she exercised sway over practically all Syria.

*Hittites*—But a new enemy arose in the north. The great Hittite power with its capital at Bogaz-Koi, about 1500 B.C. became a menace to the Palestinian outpost of Egypt. By 1350 B.C. they held the whole country in subjection. By the end of the century the tide turned, and Egypt again had the upper hand for half a century, but by the beginning of the thirteenth century she had lost her hold on the country practically forever. Palestinian conditions during these three centuries were very bad indeed. She was the field of conflict on which these two nations, Hittites and Egyptians, fought out their bloody quarrels. Always the prize of the victor, she suffered at the hands of both.

*The Habiri*—Further, nomadic tribes from the desert were again pouring across her frontiers and adding to the perplexity of the situation. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets, letters discovered in Amarna in 1887 by Petrie, written in cuneiform, containing correspondence between the Egyptian kings Amenophis III (1411–1375 B.C.) and IV (1375–1358 B.C.), and the king of Mitanni, and petty kings of Palestinian cities, reveal the wretched confusion to which the Canaanites were subjected. Most significant is the information that is contained in some of the letters, especially those of Rib-Addi, king of Gebal, and of Abd-Hiba of Jerusalem, to the king of Egypt. Both complain that invaders are plundering the land and make it impossible to pay the required tribute. All is in chaos, and they ask for troops in order to restore peace and prosperity. The letters belong approximately to 1400 B.C. or a little



later, and speak of the invaders as Habiri. While this word is strikingly like "Hebrews," it is doubtful if we should so translate it. At best they can be related to Israel only in the most general way, and it is even possible that they may have been bands of mercenary soldiers sent in by foreign powers.

Excavations in all parts of Palestine show the same general confusion. It was a time of chaos and loosely organized life. Small tribes were roaming through the land clashing with other similar tribes. Many villages dotted the countryside, but they trembled at the prospect of fire and sword, and were ever ready to change their residence overnight. Only a few cities were more or less proof against the ravages of raiders and enemies. Such were the conditions down as late as the end of the period of the judges. The population of Palestine proper, a great medley of tribes, and even a mixture of races, numbered perhaps considerably less than a million. Not until some time after 1000 B.C., the time of the beginning of the Hebrew monarchy, do we find something of order emerging out of these primitive, incoherent, group movements.

## CHAPTER II

### GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE

*The Maritime Plain*—Palestine is in itself a little world which possesses every variety of material condition needed to produce the greatest diversity of life. Running north and south there are four well defined areas. The maritime plain runs from Sidon to the wady el-Arish in the south. It is very narrow at the north, but widens gradually to about twenty miles, reaching from the Mediterranean eastward to the foothills of Samaria and Judah. Its alluvial soil, long ages ago the bed of the ocean, and later covered with a considerable forest, of which only a few scattered groves remain, and now watered by the annual rains and a few perennial streams, is very fertile. Grain fields abound, particularly towards the south. Wheat and barley are cultivated. Palm and orange groves are numerous, especially in the middle section, and beans and melons are found in gardens throughout the entire plain. Its ports at Gaza and Acco opened it up to maritime traffic. Through it lay one of the ancient highways down to Egypt. Gaza was a center for the desert trade, from which it greatly profited. The whole plain lay under the ridges of Samaria and Judah.

*The Shephelah*—Between this plain and Judah lie the low lands, technically known as the Shephelah. This was the buffer country between Judah and Philistia. Rising somewhat rapidly from the plain, the low hills are from 500 to 800 feet, with a few peaks about 1500 feet, above sea level. This strip of terri-

tory, not more than five miles wide, is intersected by five important valleys, the Ajalon, Sorek, Elah, Afranj, and Hesy, which run from east to west. Throughout its whole course north and south, it lies about a thousand feet below the table land of Judah, the result of an ancient fracture of the underlying limestone strata. Thus Judah was splendidly protected from invasion. In the days of her strength she could contest the possession of the lowlands with the Philistines, and often did successfully. In the days of her weakness a few men having the advantage of the highlands could withstand a thousand.

*The Mountain Highlands*—The second general division is the mountain ridge that runs from the Lebanons to the south of Judah. Here are three clear-cut areas, each with its own peculiar features. The north, rugged and mountainous, with splendid, fertile valleys, is completely cut off from the rest by the well-watered valley of Esdraelon. South of this lies Samaria, with its innumerable precipitous channels which honeycomb its limestone sides. Still farther south, below the Ajalon, which threatens to divide it from Samaria, lies Judah. It is a comparatively smooth and barren elevation, which south of Hebron (cir. 3000 feet above sea level) rapidly slopes down to the desert, becoming more and more unproductive with each step of the descent.

*The Jordan Valley*—Then comes the third division, the well-known Jordan valley, reaching from Banias in the north, to south of the Dead sea. The marvelous story of this valley's history may yet be read by the observant eye. Here is the residuum of a great inland sea that once filled the valley from Lake Merom to a point fifty miles below the present southern extremity of the Dead sea. Earlier still, the evidence indicates, land connections existed between Africa and this country which is but part of the Arabian desert. Fish

are still found in the waters of the Jordan, and flowers bloom in this heated midsummer furnace, which are found in no other place except tropical Africa.

The valley, which stretches between Lake Galilee and the Dead sea, a distance of sixty-five miles, has a width of from two and a half to fourteen miles. Its descent is very rapid, and it is at its outlet 1292 feet below sea level. Streams, that in the rainy season become rushing torrents, flow into it from either side. The vegetation is most luxuriant, while the temperature in the summer months is unbearably hot. Dates, flax, and grain have been cultivated, and the villagers from the hills have frequently had their gardens in the fertile soil of the valley. Few cities have ever been built here, Jericho being the chief exception. The few Arabs who inhabit it are a degenerate race. It has ever been the frontier of Palestine, acting as a bulwark against the encroachments of the desert. There are many fords, five of them important, which have served from time immemorial for the traffic east and west.

*East-Jordan Land*—The fourth main division is that that lies east of the Jordan. Here are three natural subdivisions. North of the Yarmouk lies the land of Bashan, which was the rich pasture land and the chief granary of ancient populations. South of the Yarmouk, reaching below the Jabbok, is the table-land of Gilead, and farther south, lying chiefly below the Arnon, is the land of Moab. This whole area, broader at the north owing to the plateau of the Hauran, which is very fertile, gradually shades off eastward into the desert.

*Geographic Influences*—Palestine then is a small land, not more than one hundred and twenty-five miles by sixty, but it possesses a great variety of soil and scenery, flora and fauna, climate and environment. It is of great importance that it lies between the desert and the sea. Entirely opposite in their influences, both

alike penetrated the life of Israel, and on her ground met in conflict. The winds from the one were parching and withering; those from the other moist and productive. The peoples of the one lived meagerly, had a monotonous outlook, and were necessarily puritanical; those of the other came in contact with the nations of the world, were cosmopolitan, and adopted world culture with its morals and religion.

*International Influences*—Further, the land was the highway for the international traffic north and south. Caravans were always on the move, along one or the other of the great lines of travel. Egypt, Edom, and Arabia sent their wares and spices north. Syria, Babylonia, and Assyria were quite familiar with the advantages of the southern trade. Greece and the Islands of the sea, even in early centuries, interpenetrated the whole land with their commerce. Palestine was also in the pathway of great migrations. Out of the Arabian desert, from the south and east, at different times, the hungry nomads pressed towards the better watered valleys for the needed sustenance. Great hordes were also pushed out of the north and sought grazing grounds in the Hauran, in Gilead, in the plains, and even west of the Jordan. Armies, also, bent on conquest in response to the ambition of some powerful monarch, were frequently on the march north or south, past the hillsides of Samaria and Judah.

Thus the people of this land, however home-loving they might be, were seldom far removed from the sound of the tread of armies, the fear of the hungry invader, and the moral and religious influence of every quarter of the known earth. Palestine was thus the theater of world forces. That which is born here must meet many conflicting currents, must look in the face of enemies, and will be put to the severest test in morals and religion. Surely this is the land of providence, and those who here can stand the test are indeed an elect people.



## CHAPTER III

### ANCIENT LITERARY METHODS

#### A—THE GENERAL FACTS

FOR any historical study, a correct appreciation of the sources used is always essential. What is the nature of the materials? Are they original documents? Do they come from eye-witnesses? Are they contemporary records or are they the product of generations of story-telling? Were they written in order to give the facts and all the facts of the case, or was history as such but of secondary interest? Have the documents passed through the hands of scribes and interpreters for centuries? In other words, the question must always be asked, what is the historical accuracy, the actual value, of the documents? To neglect such careful scrutiny of the sources used would land us either in intellectual confusion, or make us blind partisans. To provide a sure foundation for our Biblical history, the material should pass the same rigid examination as that in any other field of inquiry. The higher the claim we make for any literature, the more severe the test it ought to be able to stand.

*Literature World-Wide*—As a preparation for our detailed study of the Old Testament history and literature, we need a broad outlook on some of the relations existing between literature and life. We well know that literature is a world-wide phenomenon. It has been found wherever there has been a developed civilization. We are able to read the history of Babylonia

and Egypt from documents contemporary with the events they record, and in each nation we are carried back millennia before the time of Christ. Greek, Chinese, and Indian literatures likewise come down to us from the days when their city and national organizations had been achieved.

Perhaps the first fact that is attested in all literatures is this, that in every nation a long period of oral expression preceded the invention of any method of representing thought by the written sign. The oldest literary remains of any country show a well-developed language, with a considerable vocabulary, synonyms more or less numerous, and varying forms of expression, all bearing testimony to a long tribal or racial history. All early literature also indicates that the people possess a rich heritage of social, national, and religious tradition. The legends and the mythologies had in preliterate days been handed down from father to son, and had taken form through the play of many minds, always long before they had been engraven on the temples or the tombs. The oldest contract tablet had for its background thousands of bargains orally concluded man to man. The earliest written peace treaty had for its ancestry hundreds of buried tomahawks, which in turn had been the descendants of a multitude of mutual agreements between ancient nation-builders. The oldest written code of laws was the product of many decisions on various questions by innumerable patriarchs and judges through long ages of oral decisions.

*Produced by Civilization*—Further, writing, or any adequate method of representing speech to the eye, has always been the invention of civilization. Primitive life never had the need or the ability to convey ideas to the mind through visible forms. True, we have pictographs and graffiti which are acknowledged to be the work of races of a comparatively low stage of

culture. These do indeed give us information, but they are not literature. The authors may have been artists, but so far as the expression of ideas is concerned they were but children. Writing in Egypt, in Babylonia, in Phœnicia and Greece, in China and India, in every case, originated at a time when there was a highly developed community life on the part of the nation in question.

Whenever new and larger groups of people were brought together in any community, either by rapid increase of population, or by the incoming of foreign elements, new and grave problems of adjustment always arose. Divergent customs must be harmonized. New regulations to meet the new conditions must be devised. The old organization must be expanded, or entirely new methods must be adopted. The meeting and mingling of many minds has always resulted in ferment and struggle, which in turn has usually resulted in a quickening of intellect. The new social complex, with its wealth of ancient custom, its varied inheritance of story and tradition, its rapidly expanding business life, its important contacts within and without the group, sorely needs some method of putting its business contracts, its intertribal statutes, its treaties and alliances with friend and foe, its growing traditions, and its recognized methods of worship into permanent form. In the history of every growing race or nation, the time came when the burdens of tradition became too great, the transactions of the present seemed too significant, and the throbbing vision of the idealist seemed too akin to the divine to be trusted entirely to the treacherous lips of man. This demand for the preservation of records, of traditions, and of ideas, rather than for communication, was the primary incentive to writing. The complexity produced the need, but the very process in turn quickened the mind to address itself to, and to solve, the imme-

diate problem. While later tradition always ascribed writing to the gift of the gods, it was in fact always the child of long, arduous, mental struggle.

*The Scribe*—The invention of writing has always made necessary the professional scribe. To produce the adept was a long, slow process, requiring generations. Only in a well-organized, highly differentiated, and permanently settled society would conditions lend themselves to the creation of such a class. Yet it is well for us to keep in mind that this is the *sine qua non* of national literature.

*Literature the Product of Life*—If writing be the product of civilization, it is also true that literature never runs before culture. The child of complex society, it is ever an integral part of it. Societies must be formed before "minutes" are kept. Institutions are organized before records are needed. Lands were cultivated before deeds were registered. Industries were developed, cities were built, communities were established, and kings held sway before tablets and histories were written. Literary achievement in any form must be an integral part of the life of the respective community. The social, industrial, political, mental, moral, and religious life are all only different expressions of the group life, and are inextricably woven together. Literature, which is the flower of the intellectual life, cannot fail to exhibit the colors of the world from which it sprang. The vocabulary used, the figures of speech, the forms of imagery, its underlying ideals, no less than its historical allusions belong to the warp and woof of its own generation, and its own people. The man of the desert will never use the language of the city, nor will the shepherd write the laws for an industrial community.

## B—THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A HISTORICAL SOURCE

When we come specifically to the Old Testament as a source for history, we must carefully observe the following facts. The book most of us use is a translation, and is thus subject to all the limitations of a translation. Any translation of the Scripture, even the poorest, is invaluable for devotional use, for morals, and for religion. But for history and theology the accuracy of our sources will measure the value of our results. We are unfortunate, further, in that our most used translation is over three hundred years old. English has changed, and our historical information has greatly increased during that time. Important words have often a decidedly different cast of meaning now than when the translators did their work. Information, gained from many different sources, often shows how inadequate was the knowledge of three hundred years ago.

The historian of the Old Testament times has to face still more serious facts. We have no original documents. Our Hebrew manuscripts are the work of scribes, and our oldest extant Hebrew Bible was written about 916 A.D., at least eighteen hundred years after the time of some of the original writers. What did eighteen centuries of copying at the hands of scribes do to the original words of the books? Only the student familiar with the Hebrew text or with different recensions of an old work can fully appreciate the result. Not a few passages in our Hebrew text are quite unintelligible. Sometimes, indeed, a verse that reads beautifully in English (cf. Job xix. 25), is far from certain in the original. It is quite clear that our Old Testament suffered at the hands of copyists the same as would any other literature under similar circumstances.



The scribe was not only a writer, he was an interpreter of Scripture. How often his interpretations slipped into the text, would be hard to say. But when we compare the Septuagint with the Hebrew, we are convinced that there has been much interpolation. The original Greek version of Job had almost eight hundred lines less than the Hebrew, some long and beautiful sections, as xxxix. 13-18, being entirely absent. Jeremiah in the Septuagint has one-eighth less than in the Hebrew, such a long historical passage as Jeremiah xxxix. 4-13 being omitted. The Septuagint of I Samuel xvii. 1-xviii. 5 lacks most of xvii. 12-31, 41, 50, 55-xviii. 5. So we might continue indefinitely, all proving that the original manuscript must at some time have received additions or suffered loss at the hand of the scribes.

But the case is clearer still as we examine some of the duplicates found within the Hebrew itself. These may be studied in the English version, which is a translation from the Hebrew. Duplicates frequently occur. II Samuel xxii. is, so far as general content, the same as Psalm xviii., but there are as many as 130 minor differences. Psalm xiv. is in general the same as Psalm liii., but in the one, Yahweh is the name used for God, in the other Elohim is used. In Ezra we are furnished with what is spoken of as the decree of Cyrus in two different places (Ezra i. 1-4 and Ezra vi. 2-5), but they bear little resemblance to each other. In I Kings viii. 23-53, we have the prayer that Solomon offered at the dedication of the temple, but when we turn to II Chronicles vi. 14-42, where the chronicler reports the same prayer, we find a number of significant omissions as well as some additions that surely smack of the late priest rather than the early king. These examples warn the student that a process of editorial or interpretative work was going on during the long centuries of scribal activity.

In no place is this work more in evidence than in the superscriptions and the historical notes to the books. A comparison of the various versions shows this very clearly. For example, the Hebrew text of Jeremiah has five such historical notes (ii. 1; xxv. 1; xxvii. 1; xlvii. 1; l. 1) that are lacking in the Greek, while the Syriac has innumerable that are lacking in both the Greek and the Hebrew.

Most of the books of the Old Testament are anonymous. That is natural. Not until recent centuries did men conceive that there might be such a thing as property in literature, and not until last century was there a copyright law. The stories and customs that were first written were public property, so why should the man who committed them to parchment attach his name to them? Later centuries, however, looked on early writings, and particularly those of a religious nature, quite differently. They loved to add the authority of a great name to that in which they had found religious value. This desire furnished the names of Enoch, Baruch, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Moses, Daniel, Adam, the twelve patriarchs, and Solomon to a vast literature written from 200 B.C. to 100 A.D. The same spirit, in the same period, credited to Ezra, to Solomon, to David, and to Moses a place in Old Testament literature that lacks any substantial foundation. Those familiar with the traditions of this period know well the slight historical value of many of them.

There are some evidences that the same attitude of hero-worship was at work even before the close of the Old Testament canon. We can use only one illustration here. In the Hebrew, David is credited with 73 psalms, while in the Greek he is assigned 84. Further, only 69 of these agree. That is, the Hebrew has a plus 4, and the Greek a plus 15. What does this mean? Which is correct, the Hebrew 73 or the Greek 84, or is the 69 that has the two witnesses, or is it the 69 plus 4

plus 15? Does it not seem rather that scribes, both of the Hebrew and the Greek, were gradually ascribing more and more of the Psalms to one whom the later ages loved to honor? A study of the contents of some of the Davidic Psalms (*e.g.*, those that speak of the temple as existing, v. 7; xxvii. 4; xxviii. 2; lxv. 4; cxxxviii. 2; and those that speak of the ruins of Jerusalem, li. 18-19; lxix. 3-4) will readily convince us that the old proverb, "to him that hath shall be given," is correct.

Thus as we approach our historical sources, we must be ready to pay the price, if we are to arrive at reasonably sure conclusions. We must exercise every care to get the facts. We must use the material discriminatingly, and must reconstruct the ancient scenes and national progress, not by using isolated texts or phrases, but by the correlation of all the material, biblical and secular, into a consistent picture of the whole.

### C—SOURCES FOR THE HISTORY OF THE BEGINNINGS OF ISRAEL

★ The sources from which we draw for the beginnings of Hebrew history are found in the Pentateuch, or better the Hexateuch. In reality, the first six books belong together. The same problems and the same literary types that are found in the first five are also found in Joshua.

*Theory of Mosaic Authorship*—Our first task, therefore, is to determine the date and the authorship of these books. Previous to the middle of the eighteenth century the answer seemed comparatively simple. Christian tradition affirmed, though not with unanimous voice, that Moses wrote the Pentateuch and that Joshua wrote the book that now bears his

name. This was simply accepted; there was no call for argument or proof. From early days, however, there had seemed to some to be many features that required adjustment and interpretation. Theories arose explaining the relation between Moses and Ezra as lawgivers, as to how Moses wrote the account of his own death, as to why some books were anonymous and others were ascribed to definite authors. Questions were occasionally raised such as, How could Moses give a list of "the kings that reigned in the land of Edom (Gen. xxxvi. 31-39), before there reigned any king over the children of Israel"? How could he speak of the east side of the Jordan as "beyond the Jordan" (Gen. i. 10, 11; Josh. xvii. 5; Dt. i. 1, 5, etc.), when he himself had never been across the river? How could Moses say: "The Canaanite was then in the land"? Little groups here and there, as the Nazarites, the Gnostics, and the Manichæans, for different, and perhaps not always well-founded, reasons, denied the general tradition of Mosaic authorship. But Christian scholarship, as a whole, which through the centuries had been fighting her battles in the fields of apologetics and dogmatics, had neither call nor training for historical investigation. Indeed it was not until the influence of the new learning stirred in the religious leaders the historical spirit, that questions of authorship assumed importance.

As the interest in such questions increased, so also did the data contributory to a solution. Mastery of the Hebrew grew apace. At the beginning of the sixteenth century much of the Hebrew lore was guess work. By the middle of the nineteenth the growing knowledge of the cognate languages, Arabic, Assyrian, and Syriac, threw a flood of light on many a dark page of the Old Testament. By the beginning of this century revolutionary advances had been made. Archæology, by faithfully unearthing the ancient remains, had

written the sketch of the cultural development of Palestine from 2500 B.C. down to the christian era. The present days are rapidly filling in the details of the story. The wealth of constantly accumulating material at the disposal of the inquirer has made the Old Testament an eminently living book. Many men of the finest scholarship and character have made its study their lifework. Achievements of the most significant kind have resulted.

The question of the authorship of the Hexateuch has been involved in the progress of knowledge. As careful, comparative study of these six books continued, and as information from all sources accumulated, the difficulties of holding to the Mosaic authorship were correspondingly increased. It was found that the books themselves made no such claim. In two of the books, Genesis and Leviticus, nowhere is there found any suggestion of authorship. In the other books there are five places that suggest authorship, but in each case the claim at best is for a small and well-defined section (Ex. xxiv. 4; xxxiv. 28; Nu. xxxiii. 2; Dt. xxxi. 9, 24; cf. Ex. xvii. 14; Josh. xxiv. 26). Further, it was realized that there was not in the whole of Scripture a single passage that was written for the purpose of asserting or defending Mosaic authorship. Thus it was seen that the theory of Mosaic authorship was largely the product of late Jewish tradition that had been accepted by Christian writers, rather than the direct claim in the books themselves.

*The Modern Theory of the Literary Origin of the Old Testament Histories*—To follow this study over a period of one hundred and fifty years would be out of place here. Patiently and slowly the facts were canvassed and theories suggested best to meet the needs of the case. The substantial foundation of the present theory was laid more than a century ago, and about half a century ago it attained its present form.



Not final in all its analyses, nor perfect in all its details, yet it has gained the assent of a great body of Christian workers, and seems at the present the conclusion that most candidly meets all the facts.

For our work we are going to assume, not prove, this the documentary theory of the origin of the Hexateuch. However, the student will have ample opportunity at every stage of the course, not only to use the results of the theory in order to build up an intelligent picture of the progress of history, but also to put it to the test, step by step. When he has come to the end of the work, he should be prepared to evaluate it for himself. Whether we accept it or not, we do well to be familiar with it. Without a general knowledge of the main lines of this hypothesis, the most important literature on the Old Testament would be to us a closed book. Most of the great Bible dictionaries, all the important commentaries, the chief volumes on Biblical theology and even the Hebrew lexicons accept it.

A summary is here presented in order that it may serve as a background for later study. The pre-Mosaic period of Israel's life had its definite social and religious customs, its songs, its stories of the patriarchs, and its primitive philosophy which aimed at explaining the mysteries which played upon and influenced human life. These originated in the simple nomadic or semi-nomadic life of their ancestors. Nothing was written, all passed from generation to generation orally. This is still true of the nomad of the Arabian desert.

The Mosaic period perpetuated all these and added the stories of the new experiences. Morally and religiously these were the days of great beginnings. Tribe joined tribe, the group grew, new laws were necessary, and Israel by choice became the covenant people of Yahweh. A decalogue, if not the whole as we now have it, then in part, indicating rights and

2. A. H. ...  
3. ...

privileges of each within this new and larger unit, became the basis of this tribal union and this allegiance to Deity. Still we are in the nomadic period, the period of oral transmission. Moses may have written a decalogue, or may even have gone beyond that, but the wilderness experience was neither in its needs nor its culture a literary period, and a Pentateuch written by Moses is an assumption that neither the conditions nor the Biblical material warrants. Such a supposition throws all the rest of the Old Testament into confusion.

The days of the judges were days of growing national coherence, but they neither foster nor claim literary activity. The stories of the heroes and the battle songs were committed to the future by word of mouth. The sure foundations of authorship do not appear till the days of the monarchy. Here, for the first time, we find a stable life, an organized society, and a class removed from the bread-and-butter line. In the court of David we meet for the first time a chronicler and a scribe (II Sam. viii. 16-17). It may not be without significance that one of these, Sheva, bears a Babylonian name (cf. II Sam. xx. 25).

We are, however, on sure ground when we state that writing was practiced among the Hebrews about 1000 B.C. Two important considerations support this conception. The first is that the Hebrews were not the inventors of writing. They borrowed the alphabet from their Phœnician neighbors. There is no evidence anywhere that they ever used any other script. We may further be sure that this borrowing did not take place till such time as they had both the need and the opportunity. Thus we can scarcely go back earlier than the days of the kingdom. The other fact is that the archæologist has presented us with a number of important finds of ancient Hebrew, Moabite, Syrian, and Phœnician inscriptions, but none is earlier than about 900 B.C. The Old Testament and

the monuments thus agree that previous to 1000 B.C. the culture of Israel was that so circumstantially portrayed in the book of Judges.

*J. Document*—The theory holds that great literary activity, resulting in much that we now have in the Hexateuch, arose during the early days of the divided monarchy. In the two centers, Judah and Ephraim, there were groups of writers who reduced to written form many of the old stories, the old songs, the laws, and ideals of their people. These two groups had in large measure the same historical background, but each had also its own tribal history and its own viewpoint. The result of this activity was that some time between 900 and 800 B.C., 850 B.C. will serve as a sufficiently definite date, the writers of the south country had completed a considerable roll. It had, naturally, certain marked characteristics. Judah, as a tribe, naturally stood in the center of the stage. Southern centers were of special interest. A brief law code was incorporated (Ex. xxxiv. 10-27) and Yahweh was supposed to have been worshiped by men from the beginning (Gen. iv. 26). Hence this document, which, of course, is not now existent in any independent form, is called the Yahwist narrative and has been designated J.

*E. Document*—A little later, perhaps 800 B.C., the northern writers completed their roll. Here attention was centered on Ephraim and Ephraimitic doings, a law code (Ex. xx. 22-xxiii. 22), now known as Covenant Code, was included and the name Yahweh was conceived to have been first introduced in the Mosaic period (Ex. iii. 13-14). Previous to this time the name Elohim is used with a great deal of consistency by these writers. This is called the Elohist document and E. is its symbol.

Many other features, some of them even more important than those referred to, all together making a

strong case for the theory, distinguished these documents originally from each other. Many evident duplicates, both of ancient story and religious custom, are found. Compare carefully, if you will, Exodus xxxiv. 10-27 from J. with Exodus xx. 23; xxii. 28-31; xxiii. 10-19 from E.

The writers of J. and E. have been spoken of as groups or schools rather than as individuals. The fact appears to be that both of the so-called documents were the result of a process. The earliest document in each case seems to have been reworked by later members of the same school. Sometimes the effort is made to distinguish between the earliest and the later work of each group, but, in many cases at least, the result must be very precarious.

After the fall of Samaria, in 722 B.C., Judah stood alone as the inheritor of Israel's history and traditions, and the perpetuator of all her moral and religious life. She thus became the repository of the two important literary documents, J. and E., each traversing in its own way, with more or less completeness, the ancient past. Fortunately, modern methods of history writing were unknown in the Semitic world. Our Macaulays and McMasters would have gone through all the material, and would have selected that which suited their purpose, and then would have consigned the rest to the waste-paper basket. Tatian's Diatessaron is the type of work done by the Semite. He took the synoptic gospels and dovetailed them into one another, making a fairly readable whole. The Arab historian of the Middle Ages did much the same. He gathered all the traditions he could find, placed them side by side, and thus, presenting the material, permits the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Historians of Judah now had J. and E. What should they do with them? The modern theory concludes that they followed the current Semitic method



of history writing, dovetailed the two together as best they could, and passed them on to posterity. This was done between 722 and 650 B.C. This offers an explanation to many otherwise inexplicable features that are found in the Pentateuch. While over a century's work in Hebrew has given us a remarkable consensus of opinion as to the dividing lines of J. and E. even in small details, yet no one considers it infallible, or anything more than the best explanation to date of all the facts.

*Deuteronomy*—Another religious movement reached its earliest literary expression some time before the reform of Josiah (II Kgs. xxii.-xxiii.), in 621 B.C., when the "book of the law" was accepted by king and people alike as authoritative. That this was Deuteronomy, or the nucleus of it (Dt. xii.-xix., xxviii.), has long been accepted, with but few objectors. How long before 621 B.C. this book was in written form it is impossible to say. It contains certain laws that in their origin belong to antiquity. Most of the laws of Covenant Code (Ex. xx. 22-xxiii. called C.C.) are here found scattered throughout the book, but frequently in a more or less altered form. While the enactments of C.C. are suited for, and hence likely originated in, an agricultural era, those of D. (*i.e.*, Deuteronomy) meet the requirements of advanced industrial conditions. A careful comparison of the law for slaves, male and female, as found in Exodus xxi. 1-11 and Deuteronomy xv. 12-18, respectively, will illustrate the difference in the two codes.

The ruling idea in Deuteronomy is the command that there shall be only one legitimate sanctuary (xii. 13-16; xvi. 5-7). While we can easily follow the influences whereby Jerusalem came to be recognized as the only place where it was legitimate to offer sacrifice or celebrate the feasts, by no stretch of the imagination can we conceive of this becoming a dogma before



the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. The fall of the northern country together with the repulse of the Assyrian army in 701 B.C., and Isaiah's message of the inviolability of Jerusalem, alone made possible the first demand of Deuteronomy.

This reform was the greatest that ever swept over Judah. Its influence was literary as well as religious. There sprang up what is known as the Deuteronomic school of writers, who collected and edited many of the existent stories and documents. The JE. history was an important part of their inheritance. That part that carried the story of the ancestors down to the time of the judges, they brought up to date theologically, about 600 B.C., by adding an occasional phrase or paragraph. To the "book of the law" (Dt. xii.-xix., xxviii., or Dt. xii.-xxvi., xxviii.) were added miscellaneous regulations (*e.g.*, Dt. iv. 41-43; v. 6-21), hortatory discourses (*e.g.*, Dt. iv. 1-40; vi. 1-ix. 6; xxvii., xxix.-xxxi.), two poems (Dt. xxxii., xxxiii.), and the Deuteronomic summary of the journey from Sinai to the Jordan (Dt. i. 6-iii. 29), which is based almost wholly on E. This completed their work in the Pentateuch and gave to the world JED.

This school also possessed and used much other literary material. Some of it came from JE., some belonged to the archives of the temple and the royal palace, and some of it was the result of the activities of still other groups. Selecting the narratives that best suited their end, they gave to posterity in the closing years of the sixth century and the opening decades of the fifth, that which we now have in the first twelve chapters of Joshua and the final editions of our Judges, Samuel and Kings.

*Priestly Activity*—In 597 B.C. and 586 B.C. occurred the first and second captivities of Jerusalem. Ezekiel, one of the captives in Babylon, was the leader of a new movement which was largely dominated by priestly

ideals. In 572 B.C. he wrote his vision (Ezk. xl.-xlviii.), the new ritual requirement for the new Judaism. A like-minded contemporary, perhaps about the same time, collected, arranged, and perhaps revised a code of ritual practices (Lev. xvii.-xxvi.), now called Holiness Code (H.C.). This was the beginning of a long development which, so far as our canon is concerned, reached its completion in the books of Chronicles about one hundred years after Ezra. So far as the Hexateuch is concerned, Ezra and his school mark the closing of an epoch and practically the closing of the book. The literary product of this school, which was included in the Hexateuch, was of a priestly cast, and is designated by P. P. itself, which embodies the activity of more than two centuries, contains within itself different units of law and slightly different points of view. Suffice it here to say that this school gathered up, organized, interpreted, and reinterpreted the ritual of ancient Israel, using all the oral and written sources at their command. They also rewrote the early history of their people, beginning with the creation (Gen. i.-ii. 4a), supplementing the JED. story where they felt it necessary, inserting in what they believed to be the proper places the story of priestly institutions and the mass of ritual, of which they were the inheritors, and arranging the whole according to an orderly, priestly, chronological scheme.

This, in brief, is the modern theory of the origin of the Hexateuch. It accepts it as the result of a literary process which reached from the early settlement in Canaan till after the time of Ezra. It finds many hands and many minds each struggling with the needs of its own generation, and each contributing its quota to the whole. Stories are here that may not agree with each other in all points, but these are not the contradictions of one author, but are the different viewpoints of independent witnesses. Laws are here that

have passed through as many as four recensions, but these are not the confusions of an individual mind, but are the evidences of religious progress through centuries of national experience. The progress indicated in this rearrangement of the material of the Hexateuch corresponds even in matters of detail with the development that is clearly indicated in the historical and prophetic books. In this progress there is indeed a unity, not that which comes from one human mind, rather it is that which comes through the one divine spirit that is ever moving forward to the light through the imperfect human media.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PATRIARCHS

#### GENESIS XII.-I

THE chapters of Genesis (Gen. xii.-i) in which we find the stories of the patriarchs, come chiefly from the combined JE. document. The analysis into the original documents may be followed in any modern commentary, and is indicated in most Bible dictionaries, but it is not essential to our work.

*Abraham*—The Old Testament story of Abraham is in large part from J., and fits in naturally with the Amorite migration, with which we are already familiar (Gen. xii.-xxv.). His name, his possible date, and his homeland, quite conclusively relate him to these people. Perhaps midway in the time of this migration, with a group of his followers, he trekked from Haran, along the well-known caravan route, to grazing lands already occupied, in part, by kith and kin. The weight of the tradition makes him a dweller chiefly in the south-land, Hebron and Beersheba being most closely connected with his sojourn and his name. His migrations from one place to another in the south and even into Egyptian territory were at that time the common-places of nomadic life.

*Jacob*—The story of Isaac, which duplicates some of the incidents in his father's experiences (Gen. xxvi. 1-11; cf. xxi. 1-18), is only a link between the "Father of the Faithful" and the father of the patriarchs. Jacob fits admirably into the picture (Gen. xxvii.-xxxvi.). In

the Old Testament tradition he is called an Aramean (Dt. xxvi. 5), which may help to place him in an Aramean migration which pushed west from the Euphrates valley about 1300 B.C. In the Bible narrative he occupies a large place as the father of the twelve patriarchs. The four mothers, however, hold the real places of honor in history, if not in the later interpretation (Gen. xxix. 31—xxx. 23). Through them we have the four main divisions of the Israelitish tribes. The story seems more informing concerning national origins than a first reading might suggest.

Woven into the charming picture is very much that reads more intelligently as tribal tradition than as personal biography. Groups have been personified, and when we seek to literalize all the expressions we do grave injustice to those who handed on to the succeeding generation the wealth of family characteristics. Personification is one of the most familiar features of Oriental literature. With the passing of the centuries some loss of perspective was inevitable. To the storyteller the individual easily blended with the tribe, insignificant links in descent were easily lost sight of, and even relationships may have been obscured. Hence, we need not be surprised that some of our stories are more significant when interpreted in the light of tribal experiences rather than as incidents in the life of the individual. By way of illustration, the relations between Jacob and Esau, while delightfully told and vividly appealing to us in our childhood days, present very serious difficulties when we try to read them merely as personal history. The hungry hunter selling his most loved privilege for a mess of pottage? No other tent close by to which he might crawl? Jacob deceived by the hairy gloves after his suspicion had been aroused? Many such features cause us to question whether in many of these stories we may not have the perfectly legitimate literary form, common in the



east, in which great movements are picturesquely personified. Israel was always ready to drive a hard bargain, even to overreach, but at the same time was jealous of her religious privileges. Edom was always on the alert for the mess of pottage. The two nations as well as their ideals were always in conflict. This story, and the same is true of many others, conveys a profound lesson which is none the less important, if in part it should be tribal rather than individual.

*Joseph*—We are led into another field in the story of Joseph (Gen. xxxvii.-l.). Nowhere in literature have we a more ideal character. That a person worthy of this laudation by posterity lived we need not question, but the moral quality of the narrative is its chief glory. Historically the Israelites are here linked up with Goshen, that part of Egypt that lay towards the desert of Sinai, and had long been a favorite haunt for the nomads in the time of drought. The origin of Ephraim and Manasseh is placed here. Through their mother they are related to the Egyptians more closely than were any of the other tribes.

*Tribal Traditions*—The lives of the patriarchs then do not, strictly speaking, present us with national history. They show us the stuff out of which the nation grew. They indicate in general the relationship of the Hebrews to the Edomites, the Moabites, the Ammonites, and the Syrians. They help us to understand their mixture of blood and the primitive conditions out of which they had sprung. These narratives are the ancient memories which succeeding generations carried forward until they were finally reduced to their present written form. The achievements of their ancestors, their high devotion to duty, their valor, their religious loyalties, their racial hopes, no doubt, lost nothing as the stories were passed from father to son. Legendary, perhaps in part, yet they are, in their most significant features, historically correct. The portrayal of life

and custom, the consciousness of migratory movements, the actual intertribal relationships are all illuminating. But as the bearers of a national confidence and a national ideal, the beauty and worth of which is never dimmed, they render us a still greater service.

It is true that evidences of primitive religion and primitive morals, which have the sanction of God (*e.g.*, Gen. xxviii. 18; xxvi. 6-17), are found in the stories. Concubinage was the practice. Slaves were held. Abraham practiced tribal ethics when he denied his wife. Idols were found in the tents. A stone was oiled, and worship was instituted where something inexplicable had happened, as did the Semitic peoples generally, and Abraham went at least part way in offering the not unusual child sacrifice. In all these things they were but following the common practices of ancestors and neighbors.

The noteworthy feature in these narratives is, however, the act and the tone which separate them from the paganism around them. The nation was to be a blessing. The child sacrifice was not performed; Abraham learned a better way. The honor that came to Joseph delighted his descendants, but the quality of his virtue and the nobility of his character place him on a loftier pinnacle than mere achievement. While these narratives are told with charming simplicity, and have all the picturesqueness that makes them good stories, they possess that moral flavor and religious insight that make them the best of sermons.

## CHAPTER V

### EGYPT AND THE EXODUS

#### EXODUS I.-XIV.

GOSHEN, the section of the country occupied by Israel, was a small district, lying north and south of the wady Tumilat, with boundaries which to-day cannot, with any degree of exactness, be defined (Gen. xlv. 10; xlvii. 1-6; Ex. i. 11). Its characteristics were quite similar to those of the desert and on the whole it was more closely related to Sinai than to Egypt proper.

The date of the Israelitish entrance into Egypt is uncertain. Josephus held that they were identical with the Hyksos, those shepherd people who overran and conquered Egypt about 1700 B.C. and who were driven out about 1580 B.C. This identification is quite improbable, though it is possible that these almost unknown people may have paved the way for the Israelites, and some reminiscences of them may have colored the Hebrew tradition. The connection of the Israelites with Goshen is likely to have been one of long standing. Abraham sojourned there. Joseph made his home there. The Hyksos belonged to the same general family. This pasture land had always been attractive to the dwellers in the peninsula. It was in fact the border land of their own territory.

The main settlement of the Hebrews in this pasture land was most likely at a time considerably later than the expulsion of the Hyksos. Nomads in Goshen would

rarely be molested by the Egyptians. The customs of the two communities were widely divergent. They had little business with each other, and for each other still less love. The shepherd would not live in the cities, and disdained the drudge at manual labor. The Egyptian despised as beneath contempt the sheep-raiser.

The relation of Israel to the shepherds of the Sinaitic peninsula, and even with Palestine, would always be much closer than with Egypt. The type of life was the same. The people were of the same blood and speech. The habits of the shepherd led him to travel over wide areas, which gave him familiarity with outlying regions. So it is more than probable that during the period in Goshen many individuals, and even groups of considerable size, may have been in more or less close contact with the Sinaitic peninsula and southern Palestine (Ex. ii. 15-iv. 14; Gen. l. 7-9). The bondage was not, in fact could not be, closely supervised for any length of time.

It is now quite generally agreed that the Pharaoh of the oppression was Ramses II (1290-1226 B.C.). He was a great potentate, ruled with a strong hand, conquered far lands, engaged in many building enterprises, and employed much slave labor. During his reign the cities of Pithom and Ramses were built by slave labor as frontier storehouses. This is the most assured point of contact in this early period. It seems to locate the time of the oppression (Ex. i. 11).

→ The exodus is one of the outstanding landmarks in Old Testament literature. The historical background is clear. For generations the nomads had occupied the fertile grounds of Goshen without molestation. An aggressive Pharaoh, with ambitious fortification schemes for his eastern frontier, pressed these desert people into slavery. The ordinary methods of the time, the hard manual labor, the taskmaster with his

lash and his disregard for life, were used. The freedom-loving spirit of this people rebelled against conditions so new and so intolerable to them.

The story quite correctly pictures this as extending over a considerable time (Ex. ii. 1-15). If we wished to read it all literally, it would cover at least eighty years; that is, from the birth of Moses up to his eightieth year. This might be placing undue weight on round numbers and on what appears to have been oral tradition. Surely less than eighty years would have rid Goshen of the last Israelite. The drastic<sup>2</sup> measures reported in Exodus i. 15-22, at best could not have been more than local and temporary. Even apart from such severity, the shepherds would not long endure the lash of the taskmaster. The desert was close by, escape to it was easy; tribes there were not unfriendly, and many of its spaces were quite beyond the reach of the arm of Egypt.

Oppression did become unbearable. General revolt was stimulated and guided by Moses, one of the remarkable characters of olden times (Ex. ii. 11-15). It<sup>3</sup> is true that the lines are often dim because of the distance between the achievement and the record. Often because of hero worship any close resemblance to actual history is practically lost. While we have long pages presenting the life and doings of this great leader in Egypt and in the desert, those earmarks, which a writer contemporary with the events would have left, are all but lacking. The whole background is very vague. Who was the princess who rescued the babe? Where was she bathing? In what part of the land were the scenes enacted? Who was Pharaoh? Is the general name used loosely for the ruler of one of the districts? Or does the tradition lift a local experience up into national significance? Where did the Israelites cross the Red sea? Where is Mount Sinai, or Horeb? So might we continue to ask questions, but

*2 Be careful. 3 More careful*



definite information is not to be had, and reconstruction is all but impossible, save in large outline.

However, the main movement seems quite certain. Moses, a man of great native gift and special training in Egypt and, more particularly, in Midian, inspired his kinsmen to a revolt, and led them out of bondage into the freedom of the desert. The migration had racial, economic, and religious incentives. Later days accentuated the religious motive. The first request to Pharaoh was that they might be permitted to go three days' journey into the wilderness to celebrate a feast (Ex. v. 2-3). Pharaoh finally relented only because of divine manifestations (Ex. vii. 14—xi. 10). The fearful and unwilling people were inspired for the journey by the wonder-working God. Yet, no doubt, natural causes were at work. The people were tired of the locality that now, under the military policy of Ramses II, was more than previously under the direct rule of Egypt. They longed for the ancient freedom of the well-known desert. The plagues, all of them more or less common to the Nile valley, added to their eagerness to withdraw (Ex. vii.—xi.). Escape was never difficult. Roads led from Egypt into the desert in at least three different places. Their flight apparently led them down the wady Tumilat a few miles, then they seem to have turned southward into the Egyptian desert to avoid the pursuing army (Ex. xiii. 37—xiv.). As they hesitated, perhaps at the southern end of the Bitter lakes, the spring wind blowing from the south or southeast greatly aided them, and likewise impeded the chariots of Egypt. Thus, most probably in the early years of the reign of Merneptah (1225-1215 B.C.), in a marvelous way they escaped from a hated and feared foe to a new-found liberty.

Many glimpses of natural motives and the naturalness of the deliverance have been preserved in the documents, but that was not the main thought of

the story-tellers. They found a deeper and richer meaning in all the experiences of their founders. To them those were no ordinary days. Yahweh was in the burning bush and in the plague experiences. He delivered them from Pharaoh, and rolled back the waters of the Red sea. They conceived, and rightly so, that the chief glory of their national birthday was the manifestation and the guidance of their God.

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## CHAPTER VI

### ISRAEL'S EXPERIENCES IN THE WILDERNESS

EXODUS XV.—XVIII., XIX.—XL.; NUMBERS X. 11—XX. 3

#### A—THE WILDERNESS CONDITIONS

THE conditions of life in the wilderness into which the refugees fled are well known. For the last three thousand years or more there can have been little change of climate, rainfall, or consequent productivity. Many little glimpses in the Old Testament assure us that the life of the Hebrews, during their sojourn, was parallel in most respects if not all to that of those who now inhabit this peninsula. There are two distinct divisions to the country. The first is the southern apex, with the splendid mountain peaks, Serbal, Musa, and Katrina, in the Sinaitic range, its valleys, wadies, and streams, one of which is very important for its water supply. Here are the famous mines, of which Maghareb and Serabit are the most noted, where the Egyptians as early as 3500 B.C. quarried turquoise and lapis lazuli. Inscriptions are also here, some of which are comparatively modern, and have been deciphered; others are more ancient, and until recently have challenged the ingenuity of scholarship.

Since the third century after Christ tradition has accepted this as the region of the early experiences of Israel and of the giving of the law. With its winding wadies, its widening plateaus, its supply of water, and its splendid pinnacles it has appealed to the imagina-

tion of the traveler and the religious historian. Some modern scholars, as well as the guide who has been schooled in christian lore, locate most of the forty stations of the journey along or near the coast of this apex (Nu. xxxiii. 5-36).

North of the V-shaped mountain range lies the dry, sandy plateau, broken by short mountain ridges running north and south, which slowly slopes up to the Negeb, and thence to the southern border of Palestine. It has scant vegetation, save around its borders during the spring freshets, a sparse and migratory population, generally occupying its borders, and a few roads of travel, which are used only occasionally by the bedouin. This is the desert Et Tih, known in the Old Testament under various names: Shur in the east, Zin in the north, and one writer uses Paran as a general designation.

Kadesh-Barnea lies, in the midst of a complex of valleys, in a wild, and almost inaccessible country in the northern part of this desert. It is abundantly supplied with water from a spring that issues from the limestone rock formation, and creates the most important oasis in all the desert.

The whole peninsula contains about 11,200 square miles, and is a rugged, savage country. Agriculture in the true sense of the word has never at any time existed in any part of it.

Indeed "it is no place of seed or of figs or of vines or of pomegranates" (Nu. xx. 5). Haphazard cultivation, a few square yards here and there of vegetables and grain, such as are occasionally planted by bedouin, was possible. It is pasture land, and that of a poor sort. Dates grow around many of the springs, and such small shrubs as the thyme are scattered over most of the desert areas. Trees such as the tamarisk, which is noted for its manna, and flowers often abound on the mountain hillsides. A few wild animals, as the hyena,

and occasionally the panther, are found, and quail is still common throughout the peninsula.

The present population, bedouin, who live on their sheep and their goats, probably on the average as numerous and as intelligent as they have ever been, numbers between four and six thousand. The life is simple and meager. The required food and clothing are supplied mostly by the flock. Fighting for important springs, and raiding their border neighbors are the extremes of their activity. Touched occasionally by the outside world, east and west, they are not of it. Civilization with its foibles and ambitions, its immoralities and its learning has always been far removed from them. A traveler last century testified that he had been unable to find in the whole country even a Sheik who could either read or write. Such unnecessary accomplishments are beyond the ken of the desert man. Such was essentially the condition of the desert and of the people, when the Israelites spent something like a generation within its borders.

## B—THE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS

Moses, the man of God, gained leadership over his people by the force of his personality, as well as by his unselfish devotion to their interests. As we have seen, he encouraged them in their wish to leave Egyptian servitude, and thus he came into conflict with Pharaoh, likely through a subordinate official or a petty ruler of Goshen, rather than directly. He gathered the slaves into an orderly caravan in the wady Tumilat, and after the simple and appropriate religious ceremonies, which were carried out in the middle of the night secretly, they left the land of their oppressors (Ex. xii. 29-35). Fearing the frontier guards, they seem to have turned south, and may

*that the Bible describes the wanderings of the Israelites in the wilderness.*



have marched as far as forty miles from the eastern end of the wady. Then, taking advantage of the shallow waters between the southern end of the Bitter lakes and the north of the Red Sea, which were driven back by a providential wind, he triumphantly led the little group of wanderers out into the desert. Here they were finally separated from the hated service under the taskmaster, and the dreaded military guards who were in hot pursuit. Before them stretched the freedom of broad spaces, the verdure and protections of ravines, and the craggy fastnesses of rugged granite ranges. Well might the host of Israel sing:

Sing ye to the Lord,  
For he hath triumphed gloriously;  
The horse and the rider hath  
He thrown into the Sea (Ex. xv. 21).

Well might after-generations celebrate this as the birthday of the nation.

Significant as this was, it was only the beginning. Moses led them out into the wilderness of Shur, and they went three days into the wilderness (Ex. xv. 22). This may perhaps give us a hint that they struck straight eastward across the desert towards Midian. Here there must have existed from very ancient times an old caravan route, which, because of the shorter passage to the Arabian desert, compensated for the hardships of the possible sand storm and the lack of water. The springs of Nakhil lie about halfway between the Bitter lakes and Akaba. It is along this pathway that the annual Moslem pilgrimage has passed for many centuries on its way to Mecca.

However, what is known as the traditional route, runs southward, skirting more or less closely the coast line, down as far as the wady Feiran. Thence it passes eastward along this wady until it reaches the foot of Mount Serbal, which the most ancient tradi-

tion claims as the Mount of the Law. Arguments both from Scripture and from geography can be arrayed for each of these routes, and for various locations for the Mount of the Law, but certainty has not yet crowned knowledge.

— Sinai-Horeb, wherever it was, in the Sinaitic range, or in the mountains of Seir, or near Kadesh-Barnea, or in the land of Midian east of the Gulf of Akaba, was a mile-post in the religious history of Israel. It was here that they as a people entered into covenant relationship with Yahweh (Ex. xix. 5; xxxiv. 10, 27; Dt. xix. 1). Much of the actual course of history has been obscured by the traditions. Some of the features are far from certain to any one. The origin of the name of Yahweh, and its introduction into Israel is not undisputed. The Old Testament narratives are not in agreement. The J. document traced the name back to primeval days, while E. and P. assert it is a new name given to Moses during his experience in Midian (Gen. iv. 26; cf. Ex. iii. 14 and vi. 3). The traditions perhaps throw light on the historic facts. It may be that Judah, from whom the J. school came, had worshiped Yahweh from very early times, but that the northern tribes, who were in large part related to Joseph and hence to Egypt, may not have been very closely connected with Judah or with Yahweh before the time of the exodus. Thus both the J. and the E. narratives may have preserved a reminiscence of their tribal past.

Nor can we disregard the part played in these formative days by the Kenites (Ex. xviii. 1-12). Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, rejoiced in all the goodness of Yahweh, and proclaimed his supremacy over all gods. He offered burned offering and sacrifice, and with Moses and Aaron celebrated a religious meal. The later union of the Kenites with Israel, and their splendid loyalty to Yahweh, hints at a very

close religious relationship (Nu. x. 29-32; Jg. i. 16; iv. 11).

Not only does this supposition, that we have here the enlargement of the group worshipping a deity already known to part of the people, fit most adequately into all the facts, but likewise it would seem that the covenant had a long history. These tribes, quite heterogeneous, quite dissimilar in the details of their history, were nevertheless one in their ancestry. They linked themselves with the Amoritic migration from the north. Abraham was their father (Gen. xv. 18, xvii. 2-21). Those Semitic pioneers were not without religious aspiration and guidance. Hopes became promises, and promises partly realized have always gained divine sanctions. A strain of faith had motived the actions of these people from the beginning. Now under Moses they faced a new venture, truly a venture of faith. Only under such an incentive could they have crossed the Red sea and gone out into the wilderness; only thus could they have been held together and have survived amidst the difficulties that they encountered. Surely, Yahweh led and fed, defended and upheld them.

But in the wilderness there were new experiences. Their hardships were many. Food was sometimes scarce, and water lacking. Local tribes warred upon them, and internal friction was a constant worry. They were restless and rebellious. But Moses was equal to all occasions. He led them to good waters. He drove back the attackers. He settled the petty disputes of individuals, and crushed incipient rebellion against his own authority. He led them to the Mountain of God, and amidst startling physical manifestations, such as were unknown in Egypt, we can well believe that he established a covenant between Israel and Yahweh (Ex. xix. 5-8, xxxiv. 10-27).

Old and well-known forms would, no doubt, be ob-

served. An animal would be slain and the contracting parties, or their representatives, would pass between the separated halves of the slain beast, each would pledge himself to keep his part of the obligation, and the sacrifice would be offered. Here the pledge of Israel was loyalty to Yahweh as their God and to his known commandments. His pledge would be the care and protection of them as his people. The symbol of this covenant, which would perpetually remind his people of his presence, and which finally became identified with himself, was the ark of the covenant (Nu. x. 33, 35; xiv. 44; Dt. x. 1-6).

The terms of the covenant that Israel was to observe are not certain. Loyalty to Yahweh, their deity, was, of course, a primary requirement, but the exact limit of the commandments that were to be observed is largely a matter of speculation. J. in a very circumstantial way makes the ritual decalogue Exodus xxxiv. 14-28, the words of the covenant which were written on the tables of stone (Ex. xxxiv. 27-28). E., on the other hand, has a very much enlarged body of law, called the Covenant Code (Ex. xx. 18-xxiii.), which is likewise made the basis of the same covenant (Ex. xxiv. 3-8). These in turn do not agree with the record in Deuteronomy, where the ethical decalogue is the law which was written on the two tables of stone when Yahweh made the covenant with Israel in Horeb (Dt. v. 2-22). It is evident that we have scattered throughout Covenant Code a recension of the ritual decalogue. Two witnesses might seem to establish this as the original body of law which Israel covenanted to keep. But a glance at the contents, which are framed for an agricultural community (*e.g.*, the harvest festivals), puts that out of the question. Turning to the ethical decalogue, we find here also two recensions (Dt. v. 6-21 and Ex. xx. 1-17) with considerable variations. It is evident that behind the

present forms there lay a decalogue, or a small group of laws, which contained the prohibitions in their simplest forms. Such a simple body of laws, ten more or less, emphasizing those principles that must be observed between the tribes, if there is to be any unity, and recognizing Yahweh as their only God, may well have been made the bond of the new community life under Moses. If this was the case, these commandments would be obligations only within the tribes, and would hardly have the universal significance which we now find in them. Such seems the best hypothesis to meet all the Biblical and historical facts.

### C—STRUGGLE AND DEVELOPMENT

Life in the wilderness was beset by many grave difficulties even to those who were more or less familiar with its conditions of livelihood. While the Hexateuch does not claim to give the minutiae of all the movement of the forty years, many of the fragments give us a lifelike picture of the actual situation. Itineraries and detailed movements we neither can nor care to follow. The general conditions, however, are writ large.

It was a period of struggle and of growth. Domestic troubles were brewing for Moses. Miriam did not take kindly to the Egyptian sister-in-law. Aaron also may have been moved by jealousy (Nu. xii. 1-15). But family quarrels were perhaps the least significant.

Physical difficulties and dangers abounded on every part of the way. Their habitat for the major part of the time was the northern division of the peninsula, running from the desert up into the southern part of Palestine. Egypt was the western boundary, and Edom the eastern. Kadesh Barnea, which is fifty miles south of Beersheba, with its famous spring, was



the center. Excursions were made by groups north into Judah, as far as Eschol, and on the east they came into conflict with Edom (Nu. xiii. 23). No doubt, like the modern Arab, they roamed at will over the whole of the peninsula, parties at times ranging southeast into Midian, and north and east as far as Gilead.

Though centers were very definite, boundary lines were neither well guarded nor firmly fixed in those days of mobile, migratory groups. Other tribes were in the country. The Hebrews came more or less closely in contact with Amalekites, Midianites, Kenites, Amorites and Canaanites. Conflict was inevitable. Sometimes the Israelites suffered defeat, but more frequently they were successful. They met the Amalekites in battle, and defeated them (Ex. xvii. 8-16).

Looking for territory which would be more adequate for their growing needs, their advance agents penetrated into Judah (Nu. xiii-xiv. 10). But the people feared to seek an entrance into the land flowing with milk and honey. There was undoubtedly a real reason for this hesitancy. A body of Israelites met the Canaanites at Hormah, and some of their number were taken captive (Nu. xxi. 1-3). This may only be a reminiscence of those encounters which made it necessary for Israel to remain longer in the less fertile land of the wilderness.

Their food supply, milk, fruit, and at rare intervals meat, was that which was customary to the bedouin. Agriculture was lacking (Ex. xvii. 3; Nu. xvi. 13; xxi. 5; xx. 5). Great was their joy when in the springtime a flock of quail was driven by the westward wind across their pathway, and the exhausted birds easily became their prey (Nu. xi. 31-35). Naturally, the consequence of the unusual gorge of flesh, neither properly killed nor cooked, was an immediate plague. No less thankful were they when the manna—

literally "What is it?"—fell (Nu. xi. 7-8). Whether this was the exudation of the tamarisk tree, which the monks of Sinai still gather and sell, or an edible lichen found in the desert, matters not. The people rejoiced in what they believed to be a wonder wrought by Yahweh, their God.

Water, likewise in a moment of great need, was unexpectedly provided them by their leader (Nu. xx. 2-13). Whether the sweetening of the bitter waters, or the bringing of the water from the rock was the uncovering of an old spring, the discovery of a fountain hitherto unknown to the tribes, or the releasing of a new current of water, the thirsty nomads neither judged nor cared. Singing their usual incantation song,

Spring up O Well; sing ye unto it;  
The well which the princes digged;  
Which the nobles of the people delved,  
With the scepter and with their staves.  
(Nu. xxi. 17-18.)

new light came into their eyes as they drank the long-looked-for waters; religious people as they were, they rejoiced in the miracle of life, and acknowledged the power and the goodness of their God. Later, devout interpreters easily turned the staves and the scepter into the rod of Moses, and duly exalted him against whom their fathers had so often rebelled (cf. Nu. xx. 2-13; Ex. xvii. 1-7). Serpents also met them by the way (Nu. xxi. 4-9). In later history we find a record from the Assyrian monuments from the time of Esarhaddon, in which the Assyrian army going through the land south of Edom—the same territory that is here indicated—is said to "have passed through one hundred and twenty double leagues of wilderness, and twenty double leagues of serpents and scorpions." Thus the Old Testament narrative gives us a glimpse

of the real experiences of the people of Yahweh in the wilderness. These were days of danger and suffering, yet later generations were sure they were always relieved in the time of need by the good hand of the wonder-working God.

But the greatest difficulty experienced was not from without but from within. During these days there was in process of formation a new community. A number of tribes, usually spoken of as twelve, now for the first time began to move and live together. Our picture of the situation, however, cannot be too rigid. The various tribes that later formed the Israelitish nation must at this period have had very wide latitude. Yet because of the union of a number of tribes in the exodus, and the common needs of the wilderness, there was a growing coherence. But just in proportion to the number of the tribes that were now brought together in a confederacy, so would be the difficulties. Each tribe had its own history, hence its own customs, both civil and religious. True, there must have been a common inheritance, but there would also be much that was peculiar to each tribe. This would necessitate very delicate adjustment. New ritual and new laws would be required for the new alliance. This, while rooted in the history of the tribes concerned, must also grow out of their pressing present needs.

New methods for the administration of justice, and a more adequate organization for this incipient nation would be required. The story of part of this is graphically told in Exodus (xviii. 1-27). Jethro, the Midianite, the father-in-law of Moses, during a visit to the camp of Israel, advised Moses to adopt the practice long in use by the Midianites. This seemed good to Moses, and he appointed petty judges who should settle all cases of minor importance in accordance with well-known custom, while he himself should

take over all the difficult cases, and act as supreme judge.

Departure from old customs always leads to conflict. The authority of Moses did not go unquestioned. He was an innovator, and some looked on him as an upstart. Dathan and Abiram, leaders of the Reubenites, opposed his authority in civil affairs (Nu. xvi. 1b, 12-15, 25-26). While the whole story is not told, we are assured that in the ensuing conflict Moses was vindicated.

Nor does he as a religious leader fare any better. The story of Korah and his company has, by the editor of Numbers xvi., been interlocked with the entirely different episode of Dathan and Abiram. It is easy to disentangle the two narratives. Korah led the rebellion against the innovations of Moses in affairs of religion (Nu. xvi. 1a, 2-11, 16-23). In this narrative, which comes from P., Korah claims that the whole congregation is holy, and asserts that Moses and Aaron are assuming too much. This is the conflict between the old equality of the petty princes of the tribes, and the new authority of the leader of the larger unit. This seems to have been the beginning of the specialization of the priesthood. The new order of the Levitical priesthood, which is represented here as having its inception in the wilderness, faced long centuries of comparatively slow development before it became fully recognized. The final result, however, was its complete justification and legalization. To the same movement belongs the account of the strange incense offered by Nadab and Abihu (Lev. x. 1-5). No doubt in those days, when order was slowly emerging out of tribal chaos, religious customs of some of the tribes would not be acceptable to the whole. The most approved methods of worship were being slowly put to the test by the whole group. Painfully did the ritual of ancient Israel come to birth and grow to

maturity. The undesirable was sloughed off, and the more approved accepted. This is one of the illustrations in which the new religion purified itself from that which was unnecessary to the new régime.

*Golden Calf*—No less illuminating is the story of the golden calf (Ex. xxxii.). Here in the hour of extremity is what seems to be a reversion to type. The nomad always had a veneration for the ox. As essential to his life, we do not wonder that it occupied a central place in his worship. But new days were at hand. A new spirit was stirring in the midst of the tribes. A more spiritual worship was demanded. Just how early there was a propaganda against images in Israel is uncertain. In the middle of the eighth century B.C. we have the definite attack by Hosea. But it is most likely that the roots of his dogma sink deep into the past. That the germ of this should lie in the desert experience, is not only comprehensible, but is the most obvious explanation for the later growth. The desert influence tended towards a very meager symbolism in religion.

The Old Testament picture of this period is reasonably complete. It gives us glimpses of that stress and strain which always accompanies national and religious growth. There were conflicts with environment and antagonisms within. A number of tribes, with varied histories, could not unite into one group without clash of leadership and ideas. A foreign group, like the Kenites, could not be assimilated without irritations within the body politic. A new emphasis could not be demanded in religion without serious heart-burnings and grave fears on the part of many. A new covenant could not be consummated apart from criticism and dissension. Nor could a new symbolism in worship be introduced without some sincere souls showing a preference for the good old ways.



## D—THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF MOSES

That, during this period, such achievements were brought well under way, is nothing short of miraculous. That later religious interpreters should conclude the story of each struggle with a picture of divine intervention in some supernatural form, is not strange. To have failed to have seen the mark of divine approval, or to have neglected to express it in terms that were appreciated by their early readers, would have been unwarranted. No man could lay foundations in the life of a nation, ancient or modern, such as Moses did, without being led by God, and without having on his actions the seal and approval of God as well as the historian.

Such achievement gives Moses a unique place as statesman and religious leader in Israel. We do not wonder that later centuries placed a halo upon his brow, or that Michelangelo chiseled the sprouting horns on his forehead. Legend alone, though at times it sadly distorts history, can place on its proper pinnacle the spirit and personality of the hero.

Part of the halo with which the ancients invested him was that of authorship. In rabbinical tradition, he is credited with spending forty days in heaven, during which time, like the angels, he ate nothing, while God instructed him in the daytime in the law and in the nighttime in the Mishna. It is said "God taught him everything which every student should discover in the course of time." In fact, he is reputed to have taught the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Phoenicians all of their respective cultures.

The student, of course, does not take all of this seriously. From what already has been indicated, it may be questioned whether any considerable part of the tradition has the warrant either of Scripture or of historic probability. Nomadic peoples living amidst

such conditions as are found in the wilderness neither possess a high civilization, nor produce literature. These were days of simple wants and simple outlook, rather than of complex culture. It was the time when the simple stone monuments at Gilgal were better understood by the Israelites than could have been an elaborate code of laws, or a volume of ancient religious interpretation.

But this was a formative period. There was a wealth of experience which was handed down to later writers. The struggles, the conquests, the deliverances, the decisions, civil and religious, by the judges, all became the property of oral tradition, and were passed on to succeeding generations. It was the day of national beginnings, and was the seed-bed of law and religion. Though our earliest sources neither encourage us to believe that Israel began her career with civil and religious codes that were complete for all time, nor to give Moses the chief seat among the scribes, yet later tradition, though with very imperfect perspective, has scarcely done more than justice to the importance of the experiences and the character of Moses. This means, not that we should resolve all the narratives into bald prose, which was neither the intention of the earliest story-tellers, nor profitable to us, but that we should find here the impulse which separated Israel from their past and from their neighbors, and the leader, who, under God, was the pioneer in the national, the moral, and the religious life of this people. If Moses gave a few regulative principles for the new intertribal observance, if he gained their united, intelligent consent thereto, if he brought this people into covenant relation to Yahweh by their own choice, then he laid the foundations of all the later religious development of the nation. Such achievement may well assure to his name a place of honor among the world's great religious leaders.





## CHAPTER VII

### ENTRANCE INTO AND SETTLEMENT IN CANAAN

JOSHUA I.—XII.; JUDGES I.—XXI.

#### A—PREPARATION

THE eagerness of the Israelites to enter Canaan from the south had been frustrated at least in part. It is quite probable that some infiltration had, however, taken place (Nu. xxi. 1-3; Jgs. i. 17). The fact that the Kenites and the Calebites, ancient clans that seem to have long roamed the borders of the desert, occupy so important a place in the history of Judah, may be an indication that small groups, that later attached themselves to Israel, at an early date, had gained a foothold in the south country (Gen. xxxvi. 11, 15, 42; Josh. xiv. 14).

Some of the northern and eastern tribes, which always were but loosely connected with the main body of the nation, may likewise have had early, partial possession of their own districts. As children of concubines, Dan, Naphthali, Gad, and Asher are related only in a secondary way to the main stock. Information from Egyptian sources indicates that some Israelitish groups were in Palestine before the time of the exodus. The Tel-el-Amarna tablets mention a strong clan by the name of the Bene-Abd-Ashirti—sons of the servant of Asher—and a little later we learn, from the inscriptions in the time of Seti I, that



there existed in west Galilee an important state by the name of Asher. Later still, in 1215 B.C., the aged Merneptah celebrated his triumph over the peoples of Palestine, and recorded amongst others the now famous line, "Israel is desolated, her seed is not." The simplest explanation of these facts is that small tribes which were more or less closely related to Israel had penetrated into Palestine, and had taken root in different parts of the country. Asher and some of the other concubine tribes may have been in the north, the Habiri—or the Confederates?—may have been in the center, and Kenites may have penetrated the south. Even a group known as Israel was in the land perhaps a short time before the main exodus. Thus we can see how such early occupation of kindly disposed clans would later facilitate Israel's conquest of the older Canaanites.

It is also probable that east of the Jordan was not entirely strange to the kin of Israel. Quite similar conditions existed here to those in the wilderness. At various times wandering herdsmen might seek pasturage for their cattle east of Moab and as far north as Gilead. The Old Testament has preserved an interesting sidelight. It is said that Reuben and Gad were awarded the east side of the Jordan because they had much cattle (Dt. iii. 19; Nu. xxxii. 1). This assures us that they had lived apart from the main body, and had had the advantage of good pasturage. What more likely than that at some early time these clans had wandered over this territory, and thus laid claim to their later possession. We have also the story, which is very hard to evaluate, of Israel's conflict in the east with Moab and Midian (Nu. xxii.-xxiv.). It is possible that here we may find the echo of an early struggle which extended far up into the territory of Bashan, and reduced some of the important cities to vassalage to Israel. By conquest and alliance Israel

seems at an early period to have gained a vantage ground east of the Jordan.

Such seem to be the underlying currents of these early days. The tribal developments, the assimilation of outside elements, the frequent change of clans and tribes from one location to another, the petty skirmishes and the more important raids, the rise and fall of the dominant elements within the tribe, all were such as to prevent any complete chronicle, or even preserve in clear outline, the most significant movements. But for centuries preceding the conquest, as well as for centuries following, the life of Palestine was in flux. Tribes were loosely anchored to their possessions. Life was a restless *mêlée* of heterogeneous Semitic clans, the newer and the older in constant conflict. Slowly, indeed, did the flux give place to settlement, and only gradually did the lines of organization appear.

### B—ENTRANCE INTO CANAAN

The nucleus of the new nation, when it left Kadesh-Barnea, moved eastward. They encountered the Edomite, and had to avoid his territory (Nu. xx. 14-21). Skirting south, then eastward, they then passed north along the eastern border of Moab (Nu. xxi. 4-9; 10-20; xxv. 1-5). They came into conflict with these, their nearest kin, and were long enough east of the Jordan, not only to clash with the Amorite, the Moabite, and perhaps the Midianite army, but also to gain a strong foothold in the land east of the Jordan (Nu. xxii.-xxiv.).

With such a preparation we can the better understand their entrance into the promised land. For a generation they had been skirting the country and looking longingly into its rich territory. Two expeditions, one from the south and the other from the east,

had entered the land and brought back their reports (Nu. xiii.-xiv.; Josh. ii. 1-24). Many similar incursions may have been made. Intercourse then as now was unquestionably a common occurrence. Invasion of Palestine from the east was the constant course of history, and now all was in readiness.

Israel on the east side of the Jordan was eager, and only awaited the proper opportunity to follow the pathway of preceding invaders. At length the climax, the crystallizing of the insurgent demands, arrived. The approved leader, the encouraging report of the outrunners, the high confidence of the waiting throng, the essential religious ceremonies, without which no people would undertake any great endeavor, and a passable ford of the Jordan, all in conjunction, proclaimed the divine will. The sturdy worshipers of Yahweh, bound into a federacy by the experiences of the past and the hopes of the present, were impelled forward to the new task, the entrance into, and the conquest of, the land. The main features of the story are clear. The ford opposite Jericho was the natural approach. Here a considerable body of invaders, the nucleus of the future nation, entered the land, unitedly under the leadership of Joshua the Ephraimite, about 1200 B.C. (Jg. i. 1; Josh. iii.-iv.).

The city of Jericho, a well-walled city, about five-eighths of a mile in outer circumference, always the prize of the invader, was captured after a prolonged siege (Josh. iv.-vi.). The narratives give in vivid color the results rather than the process, and celebrate the power and the glory of Yahweh, the conquering God of Israel, rather than the prowess of the soldiers, and the long, weary struggle of the people. Only a few stray words hint at the severity of the conflict and the valor which ultimately gained this key to the land. The armed men were in the forefront of the procession, surely for obvious reasons, and the record further states

"the men of Jericho fought against you" (Josh. vi. 9; xxiv. 11). Then followed the capture of the little village of Ai, which required military strategy, as well as a purification of the tribe and a renewed dedication to Yahweh (Josh. vii.-viii.). Later days glorified the power of Yahweh in their every forward step, and rightly looked on this experience as epochal in their history.

### C—OCCUPATION OF CANAAN

Our sources for the settlement of Palestine are twofold. The archæologist furnishes us with little that has direct bearing on the subject. Egypt and Babylonia were either too weak or too busy with internal affairs to go beyond their own borders. Excavations in Palestine have given us no inscription for the period from 1200 to 1000 B.C. But the general social and industrial condition of the country is amply illustrated by the débris and pottery from ruined cities.

The Old Testament, Joshua and Judges chiefly, is then the only source for any detail. Joshua is the continuation of the first five books of the Old Testament. It has preserved no writing that was contemporary with the settlement. The stories were repeated from generation to generation, not for the sake of history, but because of personal interest. It is no wonder that few names, as Joshua, Rahab, and Achan, have been preserved. Apart from these we meet only shadow figures, officers, spies, Levites, priests, and kings, in the place of men who once loved and hated, fought and conquered. Hence, any reconstruction of the history of these early days must leave wide gaps and can treat only of general conditions of life and growth.

Joshua falls into three parts: chapters i.-xii., the conquest, xiii.-xxi., the division of the land, and

xxii.-xxiv., the settlement of the two and a half tribes, and the farewell speeches of Joshua. Our chief concern is with i.-xii. and a few fragments in sections two and three. JE. constitute the larger part of the first section, and, as they lie nearest to the events in point of time, are the most important historical sources. D. adds i., ii. 10, 11; iii. 2-4, 5-9; iv. 11b, 12, 14, 21-24; v. 1, 4-7; ix. 1, 2, 9b, 10, 24, 25, 27b; x. 8, 12a, 14b, 25, 28-43; xi. 10-23; xii.—which contributes nothing of historical knowledge, but gives the Deuteronomic summaries and viewpoint. P. inserts a few chronological and theological notes, iv. 13, 19; v. 10-12; vii. 1; ix. 15b, 17-21.

The second division, xiii.-xxi., comes chiefly from P., and carries out the priestly theory of how the twelve tribes should have proceeded to divide up their inheritance. In the third section, xxii.-xxiv., only xxii. 1-8 (D), which touches the settlement of the two and a half tribes, has an historical bearing.

Judges, in its present form, is the result of D. using material from a collection of hero-stories that had been gathered probably by JE. Chapter i.-ii. 5 is part of an early history of the conquest preserved by J., and has been untouched by later hands. Chapters xvii.-xxi. are two appendices telling of the origin of the sanctuary at Dan (xvii.-xix.), and the reason for the smallness of the tribe of Benjamin (xx.-xxi.), which likewise belong probably to the early book. Apart from a few notes (*e.g.*, xvii. 1; xviii. 1; xix. 1; xxi. 25) these chapters also have not suffered from the editor.

The body of the book, ii. 6—xvi. 31, stands quite by itself. The Deuteronomic editor took those selections that best suited his purpose from the original JE. book of Judges, and put them into his chronological and theological framework. The chronology, with its recurrent twenty and forty, is quite artificial, and



one wonders if it should be used at all to determine dates. The theology is that common to Deuteronomy (cf. Dt. xxviii. 1-68 and Jgs. ii. 6-iii. 6; iv. 1-3; v. 31b; vi. 1; viii. 27b, 28b, etc.). So long as the nation served Yahweh they prospered and were triumphant; whenever they sinned the invader rushed in and punished them. When they repented, Yahweh sent a deliverer, and they had rest for a number of years. This was the Deuteronomist's religious interpretation of history. The evil must be punished in material things, and the good must enjoy temporal blessings. The writer selected twelve heroes from this earlier book of Judges, and used them as illustrations to press home his thesis. To this he added an introduction (ii. 6-iii. 6), which is his résumé of the period.

To follow the progress of the settlement is not without difficulty. Our records do not always agree in particulars (cf. Jgs. i. 11-21 and Josh. x. 38-42). But the preponderating evidence shows that the course of conquest is divided into three streams. Judah, accompanied by Simeon, that is, the Leah tribes, went into the south country, and in due time conquered the chief hill cities, Hebron, Bethlehem, and Debir (Jgs. i. 2-21; Josh. xv. 14-19). Here, later, the Calebites, the Kenites, and the Jerahmeelites joined forces with them. (These clans were independent units as late as the time of Saul, cf. I Sam. xxvii. 10; xxx. 14.) The narrative gives no suggestion as to the duration of the struggle or the process of settlement. It even fails to distinguish between raids and conquest. Jerusalem may have been raided, but surely was not captured (cf. Jgs. i. 8) and Gaza, Askelon, Ekron, and their borders did not in those days, in reality, pass out of the hands of the Philistines (cf. Jgs. i. 18). The historical perspective is still further lost when we turn to the Priestly narrative (*e.g.*, Josh. xv. 1-13). His boundary lines are purely theoretical, and represent the ideal

extent of Judah, which was probably never controlled in its entirety. The actual fact is stated in Judges i. 19, "He drove out the inhabitants of the hill-country, for he could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley because they had chariots of iron." Even the complete mastery of the hill-country was a matter of decades, rather than days. Armies were not drawn up in modern battle array. Raids, sorties, and guerrilla warfare were the approved methods. Tribes camped in protected spots, and intermittently carried fire and sword into adjacent villages. Many of the defeated escaped, only to return and wreak vengeance on their assailants, and to build again their broken houses. Important cities like Hebron, Bethlehem, and Debir would not easily be relinquished. Only after long struggle and much assimilation were such strategic places likely to become the undisputed possessions of Judah.

The second stream was composed of the Rachel tribes. Whether it was contemporaneous with that of Judah is quite uncertain. Led by Joshua, they attempted to gain the great central plateau (Jgs. i. 22-29; Josh. vii.—x. 25). Repulsed at Ai, by resort to strategy they overthrew the village. Bethel, the next place in line, was taken. The Gibeonites, a Canaanite tribe, by a ruse, gained an alliance with the conquerors. Later, Bethoron was the scene of a decisive battle, fought and won by Joshua against a combined host of Canaanites. Thus, by victory and alliance, the Rachel tribes, Joseph and Benjamin, obtained possession of their inheritance.

One striking difference between Ephraim and Judah, owing to the contour of the land, ought to be noted. Judah is a comparatively smooth table-land, easily guarded because of the precipitous decline to the table-land of the Shephelah. The highlands of Ephraim are intersected by innumerable wadies, and the

slope down to the plain is gradual. Raiding here was not only more profitable, but was much easier than in Judah. Decisive victory was not so easy. Hence, as isolation from the Canaanite and the Philistine was impossible, assimilation and alliance went on more rapidly and more thoroughly in the north than in the south. This difference in the topography of the two countries contributed much to the marked divergence in their respective economic and religious histories.

— The third division in Israel embraced the concubine clans. They were on the outskirts to the north, and always were the least significant part of Israel. It is only considerably later than 1200 B.C. that we find any vital bond between these and Joseph and Judah. An early fragment tells how Joshua put four Kings of the north to rout, by the waters of Merom (Josh. xi. 1-9). But it is strange that Joshua the Ephraimite should be so far from his own territory, and curious that in Judges iv. we have again the story of a battle against King Jabin. It is also improbable, to say the least, that the defeated army was scattered to Sidon and Mizpah. That there were conflicts in the north in the early days, is quite probable, but it is quite likely that here oral tradition, innocently enough, has intermingled stories from different parts of the country, and perhaps even from different periods.

Two lines of important fortresses situated in the two valleys running from east to west long remained in the hands of the Canaanites, and split Israel into these three groups. Between Judah and Ephraim lay the valley of Aijalon, with the cities of Gezer, Aijalon, and Bethshemesh, which along with Jerusalem, were held by the Canaanites. Still more effectively were the northern tribes, Asher, Dan, Naphthali, and Zebulun, separated from their kinsmen by the valley of Esdraelon (Jgs. i. 27-33). The bridging of these gulfs belongs to the period of the judges.

## D—THE SETTLEMENT

A graphic portrayal of the struggles and growth of Israel during the process of settlement is preserved in Judges ii. 6—xvi. 31. This part of the book is a sermon, but the illustrations that are used to drive home the text are the hero-stories that had been handed down from the early days. The arbitrariness of the chronological scheme, the twenties and forties, forbids us to use it statistically. The editor may have intended to suggest that the period extended over four hundred years, but trying to manipulate his figures does not prove satisfactory. All depends on the point from which we start. Perhaps two hundred years, or less, may approximately cover the period from the fall of Jericho down to Saul. If we reach back, and estimate the time from those days in which stray groups of Hebrews under various names, as Asher or Israel, wandered through the country, we might well speak of it as four hundred. But chronology fails us.

The life of the nation is, however, adequately described. It is the story of the difficulties of settlement. They met foes from three different quarters. The Canaanites were still to the fore. Until these were subdued, Israel could have neither ability nor interest to meet others. How long petty warfare and assimilation continued after the heights were securely held, before the final crisis came, we do not know. As Israel grew in numbers, formed alliances, and gained strength, she must needs turn her eyes, for material resources, as well as for strategic purposes, to the Esdraelon plain. Many seemed willing to leave well enough alone, but in Israel there arose a woman who saw that national unity, national strength, and national religion, all alike cried out for the possession of this valley. Deborah rallied the flagging energies of the tribes bordering on this territory. Barak was her henchman. Together



they roused to the standard six tribes against Sisera, perhaps a Hittite captain, and Jabin, king of Hazor, who held the valley. The story of the victory, so essential to the national future, was long the worthy theme of bard and fireside story-teller. Two accounts, one in prose, the other in poetry, differing somewhat in detail, but both corroborating the essential fact, have been preserved (Jgs. iv.-v.). The poem, evidently one of the earliest of the nation's war songs, breathes the spirit of the time. Yahweh is the war God from Sinai, who leads his people, who delights in the intrigues and the valor of battle, rather than in the milder ways of peace or in the loftier conceptions of morals. Yet we know that military virtues and loyalties have ever been the disciplines that have paved the way for the higher morals and religion.

The battle of Megiddo enabled the northern and the middle tribes to unite, and thus not only did they possess the wonderfully fertile valley, but the confederacy was enlarged and strengthened. Once firmly established in the land, Israel must next defend herself from outside attacks. The same pasture land, the same grain to be had for the raiding, which had attracted the Hebrews, always lured others over the same Jordan fords. Two invasions from the east are mentioned. The Moabites crossed the Jordan, took Jericho, and put the Benjamites to tribute (Jgs. iii. 12-17). The prowess of a single individual, Ehud of Benjamin, gained freedom from Eglon.

More serious was the Midianite invasion, up the wady Ferah, into the very heart of the Ephraimite country (Jgs. vi. 1-viii. 35). Israelites at this time were turning from their early nomadic habits to the more substantial but more arduous life of agriculture. At best, bending the back to such toil is difficult. To the nomad it was a transition that was only slowly and painfully made. If the desert people should continue



to raid the harvest fields, how long would these new farmers pay the price agriculture demanded? Easy indeed would it have been to have slipped back into the old lazy life of sitting

. . . among the sheepfolds  
To hear the pipings of the flock.

But such a spirit would never have produced a nation, a literature, or a worthy religion. The man was ready for the hour, a man whose own labors were greatly endangered, and on whom had fallen the duty of blood revenge (Jgs. viii. 18-21). Gideon had the grace of humility and the gift of strategy. Under the severity of his tests the loose rabble melted away, and three hundred men, who had but one passion, stood by him ready for the fray. The raiders already possessed a wholesome fear, perhaps with good reason, of this son of Manasseh (Jgs. vii. 13-14). In the middle of the night, with a blast of trumpets and a flare of torches, with the old war slogan, "the sword of Yahweh and of Gideon", Gideon and his band burst on the amazed, terror-stricken pillagers. The rout was complete. The enemy was chased out of the country, and the severest penalties were exacted from them and their accomplices. What a theme for the hero-worshiper, and how well it has been told (Jgs. vi.-vii.)!

The Ammonites likewise disputed the territory with Israel (Jgs. x. 7-11). While they seem to have made an effort to gain possession of the hill country of Ephraim and Judah, they made it unpleasant chiefly for those on the east side of the river, with Gilead as their fortress. Jephthah, an outlaw Gileadite, was called to the leadership, and in time reduced the enemies to terms (Jgs. xi.).

If the military prowess of this young nation was tested and strengthened by constant conflict with

Canaan and with invaders from the desert, their villages in the west were not free from encroaching enemies. Along the Mediterranean coast, almost from Carmel to the wady El-Arish, often called the river of Egypt, extending towards the low-lying foothills of Judah, were the Philistines. These people, of Aryian origin, coming from Crete and the near-by territory of Asia Minor proper, forced out of their homes by invaders from the east and north, had made their way into the southwest of Palestine, some coming by land and others by water, shortly before 1200 B.C. While they preserved some of their ancient customs, and refused circumcision, they readily adopted the language and many of the ways of life of the Canaanites. With more of a genius for organization than their Semitic neighbors, they formed a strong confederacy of five cities, Askelon, Ekron, Ashdod, Gaza, and Gath, all situated in the south.

Both peoples, Judah and the Philistines, needed to expand. For both the Shephelah offered the natural outlet. In the early days, the Philistines, because of their experience in military affairs and their freedom from other conflicts, gained considerable advantage. Judah, however, possessed the vantage ground. From her hills she could watch the approach of the enemy, ambush her forces, and circumvent her attacks. At times there was comparative peace, yet the cause of conflict always remained, and at any moment old feuds might flame out anew.

The story of Shamgar, probably the name of a Hittite, is unconnected with its present context, and in an exaggerated way commemorates the exploits of some individual otherwise unknown (Jgs. iii. 31). >Samson, though scarcely worthy of the rank of judge, or deliverer, is of more real interest (Jgs. xiii.-xvi.). He was a Danite, perhaps one of those left behind when the six hundred valiant men of the tribe moved

from Zorah and Eshtaol northward to find some more acceptable possession (Jgs. xviii.). He was the strong man of the countryside, who in the rivalry of contending groups became the heroic figure around which there easily accumulated numerous tales of individual prowess. No doubt for these there was a real basis in fact, but the exploits of Samson do not seem either to have strengthened Judah or weakened the Philistines. In the early days of the Kingdom we find them still formidable rivals of Israel.

The picture of the social and the religious life in these stories shows conditions as they were. The social customs, particularly those of the marriage celebrations, the eating and drinking, the songs and riddles, the rude contests and ruder merriment, all ring true to life. National relations are accurately set forth. The two nations were on sufficiently friendly terms to permit of intermarriage, though it was not considered by all to be in the best taste. Race interest and hatred ran deeply enough for a Philistine maiden to betray her lover into the hands of her own people. Private quarrels such as these were likely to be of frequent occurrence.

The religious picture perhaps fairly represents the average Israelite of the day. The moral status was not high. The bonds of sex morality were loose. Pagan religious ideas were prevalent. The vow of the Nazarite was a religious act of seeming importance, though Samson observed only one of the later requirements (Nu. vi. 1-6). The whole story has been resolved by some into a piece of well-wrought-out solar mythology. But there seems no adequate basis for this. It reads more like an early folk-tale that celebrated these feats of physical ability, which always so much delight the child mind. In its social and religious atmosphere it fits perfectly into the condition of the time.

*Developments*—The book of Judges also gives us a good view of the inner life of the people. With the constant warfare there was continual development, a growing tribal coherence, and an increasing complexity in their civilization. At the beginning of the period we found three groups with very slight bonds of sympathy. The tribal sense was strong. Ephraim was jealous of Manasseh and of Gilead (Jgs. viii. 1; xii. 1). Dan had little consideration for the clans of Ephraim, and Benjamin suffered severely at the hands of the other tribes (Jgs. xvii., xviii., xxi.). Judah had no call and apparently no interest in the battle of Megiddo. The old tribal law of blood revenge was the rule of the day (Jgs. viii. 19). They were indeed days of confusion, "when every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

Still, we note the signs of growing unity. Deborah marshaled six tribes to battle, and thus bridged the gap between the north and the middle. Gideon united the forces of Manasseh and Ephraim, and Jephthah numbered in his army men from west Jordan as well as from Gilead. The movement towards unification is also illustrated in the abortive attempt of Abimelech, whose mother was a Canaanite, to hold the Kingship (Jgs. ix. 38-39).

Progress had likewise been made in their industrial life. They entered the country as bedouin. Sheep and cattle were their source of supply. In the beginning they had supplemented this with the grain they had taken in raids (Josh. v. 12, P.). Slowly, under the tutelage of their neighbors, they had learned the processes of agriculture (Jgs. vi. 4; xvi. 18; xv. 1). Their wealth must have increased rapidly. The record of three of the minor judges reflects the growing splendor of these days. Jair, for example, "had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities" (Jgs. x. 4). Along with the agricultural dis-

cipline came a more vigorous life, a greater wealth, a wider range of interests, a greater mental alertness, and changing social and religious customs to suit the changed economic conditions.

Bound up with the cultivation of the soil were Canaanitish rites which were believed to be inseparable from its fertility. All of these, incantations and symbolism, springtime and autumn festivals, religious dances and sacrifices, linked the farmer to Baal worship. The Hebrews necessarily learned agriculture and the religious rites together. But the rites, even as the land, they appropriated in the name of their God, Yahweh. Thus the Baal altars on every hillside throughout the land were dedicated to the conquering God, and Yahweh became the Baal, that is, master of the land. Loyal Israelites found no reason why they should not call their children by this ancient Canaanitish name for deity, as Jerubaal, Ishbaal, and Meribaal indicate. It is quite true that there were those, as the Nazarites and the Rechabites, who from early days were opposed to this assimilation.

Morals could not escape the influences of the transition period. The new civilization had many a pitfall for the unwary. The new luxury meant new revelry and new license. The wars of conquest fed the fires of passion and of brutality. The changing times contributed to the lawlessness so "that every man did that which was right in his own eyes." In the concluding chapters of the book, we have a glimpse of the moral conditions at their worst (Jgs. xix.-xxi.). This is one of the earliest parts of the book. The story is told of the shameful abuse of the Levite's concubine by the Benjamites of Gibeah. The new life with its abundance had nurtured the physical powers, developed the nerve centers, and hence intensified the sexual passions, and the beast within had broken loose in a wild orgy of lust. But the narrative has for us even



greater significance than this. It is to be noted that the Levite and again the Israelites were enraged at the offending city, not for any breach of the moral law or for the violation of a woman's honor. That was too delicate a point for their consciences. But the disregard of the ancient law of hospitality, and the violation of a man's property rights in his concubine appealed to them as outrages. In their anger they decimated the Benjamites to whom amends were made later.

New laws, likewise, to meet new conditions were either borrowed from their neighbors or devised by their judges to meet the requirements of the case. These were the days of building foundations for the national life, and the book of Judges affords us a very complete picture of the forward movement from the simple to the complex, from the primitive to the civilized.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY

SAUL (?—CIR. 1013 B.C.)

I SAMUEL I.—XV.

#### THE RISE OF THE MONARCHY

*Literature*—In order to reconstruct the story of the beginnings of the monarchy, we must go to I and II Samuel for our materials. Again we have a compilation, and the fragments, often disconnected, were written from different viewpoints. There are various duplicates of the same event (cf. I Sam. ii. 27–36 and iii. 11–12 or xiii. 7–15 and xv. 1–35 or xxiii. 19–21 and xxvi. 1–3 or I Sam. xvii. and II Sam. xxi. 19, etc.), and different interpretations of the same fact (cf. I Sam. viii. 1–22 and ix. 1–10, 16). Some stories read like the descriptions of eye-witnesses, others are the conclusions of moralists.

The analysis and evaluation of the sources which have been carefully worked out may be found in any good commentary or Bible dictionary. For our purpose it must suffice to note that the oldest documents used, and these constitute a large part of the book, were written from sometime between 900 and 800 B.C. That places them within a century or so after the events described. These, because of content and style, are easily divided into five groups, in which there are

only occasional annotations. (a)—The early life of Samuel (I Sam. i., ii. 11–26; iii. 1—iv. 1a; xv.). (b)—The history of the ark (I Sam. iv. 1b—vii. 1). (c)—The history of Saul (I Sam. ix. 1—x. 16; xi., xiii. 2–7a; xiii. 15b—xiv. 46). (d)—The early life of David (I Sam. xvi. 14–23; xvii. 1–11, 32–54; xviii. 6–16, 20–29a; xix. 1—xxi. 9; xxii., xxiii., xxv.—xxxi.). (e)—The history of David as king (II Sam. i.–vi., ix.–xx.). The realistic pictures of these early stories carry the conviction of their essential accuracy.

Later, perhaps during the exile, the Deuteronomic school, as with our previous sources, edited these early documents. They introduced material handed to them by tradition, touching such features as the ark, the kingship, and the proposed temple, here and there by phrase or paragraph, added their religious conviction, incorporated general summaries and other important material, and in a general way brought ancient history up to date (*e.g.*, I Sam. ii. 1–10, 27–36; vii., viii., x. 17–27; xi. 12–13; xii., xiii. 7b–15a; xiv. 47–51; II Sam. vii., viii., etc.). The final arrangement of the material was not always chronological (*e.g.*, II Sam. xxi.–xxiv., most of the events of which belong to a period earlier than those in II Sam. ix.–xx.). While the boundary lines of some of the original records and the contribution of the editors are often very well defined, the whole presents a very lifelike picture of the struggles and the progress of those formative days.

*Transition Brought Responsibilities*—The transition from the rule of the petty judge to that of the king was quite natural. The forces at work throughout the period of the judges were now coming to their own. Agriculture had become more general; possession of the conquered villages and their environs was more secure; social life had grown richer and more complex; the Canaanites were more completely assimilated; and the tribes more united. Therefore by virtue of their

growing civilization, greater responsibilities must be assumed.

Samuel, the king-maker, was the last of the judges. Eli serves chiefly as a background for this more heroic figure. The story chronicles a stage of decided advance. Shiloh was a prominent sanctuary. Not only were the feasts celebrated there, but there the ark and its acolyte remained (I Sam. i. 3, 9, 24; iii. 1-9). Eli of the house of Ithamar, the fourth son of Aaron, was the priest in charge of the sanctuary. He also combined with that, as in the patriarchial days, the function of judge. Naturally enough, his sons were anxious to hold these privileges for themselves. These youths also had sufficient initiative to suggest what seemed to them a juster method of provision for the priesthood than the haphazard custom of the time (I Sam. ii. 13-17). Such changes, to say nothing of other evils attributed to them, were quite distasteful to the people at large, and the story records the signs of Yahweh's displeasure against them for their sins (I. Sam. ii. 13-17, 22; iv. 1-22).

*The Philistine Victory*—At this time the Philistines became a serious menace. Each group was expanding and reaching out for more territory. Their armies finally met at Aphek, and the lords of the Philistines repulsed the hosts of Israel. The sons of Eli, who were the guardians of the ark, were slain, and the ark, the symbol of victory, was carried in triumph back to the cities of the conquerors (I Sam. iv. 1-22). Shiloh was probably destroyed, as we hear no more of it in history. Tribute was exacted from Israel, and much of their land was occupied by the victors.

These were sore experiences for Israel. Their servitude to the Philistines was humiliating. Smithies in which could be forged the weapons of warfare were prohibited throughout the land (I Sam. xiii. 19-20).

Garrisons were situated in strategic places, as Gibeah of Benjamin, in the midst of the conquered territory (I Sam. xiii. 3). Some of the Hebrews sought to escape trouble by crossing the Jordan (I Sam. xiii. 7). Others scattered northward beyond the reach of the enemy (I Sam. xiv. 22), while still others with weaker race prejudices and milder national hopes threw in their lot with the conquerors (I Sam. xiv. 21).

*The Kingship and Saul*—The need of the hour was a united people, and that could be secured only through competent leadership. But even leadership would fail ultimately unless provision were made for its perpetuation by organization. Kingship alone could save Israel. This was the cry of many people. Samuel, the seer, was one of the farsighted men of the time. One of the oldest narratives of the book has preserved the story of an interview he had with Saul which most likely helped to shape public opinion (I Sam. ix. 1—x. 16). The young Benjamite, on a tour to round up the strayed asses of his father, as a last resort, called on Samuel for assistance. The prophet had more urgent business. He, however, privately interviewed the young man, publicly honored him at the feast, and then in the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel, dedicated him to the exalted task of the kingship.

Shortly afterward Saul had the opportunity of proving his ability. The Ammonites, besieging the city of Jabesh-Gilead, demanded capitulation on the most atrocious terms (I Sam. xi. 1, 2). In despair the besieged sent out a call for help. The men of Gibeah, Benjamites, perhaps closely related to the Gileadites (cf. Jgs. xxi. 8–15), were deeply sympathetic. Saul, a plowboy, in intense indignation aroused the slumbering ire of the tribes. Hastily he gathered a considerable army, by forced marches reached the camp of the overconfident Ammonites, by strategy attacked them



in the early morning from three sides, and with great slaughter drove them back to their own villages (I Sam. xi. 1-15).

Were there already whisperings that this youth of such princely carriage and such burning passion would make an ideal leader? Had his previous life been a preparation for a great venture? Was Samuel's judgment in the matter widely known? However, the relief of Jabesh-Gilead acclaimed the hero, and the need and the man of the hour came together. In a solemn conclave, with the approved rites, sanctioned by Samuel, the patriot and prophet of Yahweh, amidst great rejoicing, Saul was crowned king at Gilgal (I Sam. xi. 14-15). At the beginning this meant the allegiance of perhaps few beyond his own tribe, Benjamin. It was only a development from the judgeship. Like his predecessors he held court at Ramah (I Sam. xxii. 6-7), but he soon enlarged the boundaries of his sway through the achievements of his arms.

But another attitude has been expressed towards the kingship. This comes from the Deuteronomic pen, and is the reaction produced by the course of history. None of the kings of either Israel or Judah were perfect, many of them were sad failures; hence a group of religious leaders looked askance at the whole movement (I Sam. viii. 1-22a; x. 17-24; xii. 1-25; xiii. 7-15a). This antagonism naturally arose quite early. It is quite probable that before the death of Samuel there was a growing cleavage between the prophet and the king. This may have been the starting point for that sentiment that later matured under the unfortunate experiences with many of the occupants of the throne.

The task before Saul was no light one. His immediate foes, the Philistines, were in the very heart of the country. These he met at Micmash, a few miles from his own home. The daring of Jonathan, his son, broke the outpost of their guard, and so inspired the

Hebrews that they routed their ancient oppressors, and drove them down the valley of the Aijalon to their lowland homes (I Sam. xiii. 23—xiv. 35).

The reign of Israel's first king was filled with wars (I Sam. xiii. 3; xiv. 52; xvii. 1). How long he reigned is uncertain (cf. xiii. 1). The order of the conflicts we have no means of determining. The general epitome of his reign tells us he fought and worsted his enemies on every side, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and the kings of Zobah, and the Amalekites (I Sam. xiv. 47—48).

But he was not free from internal strife. There were too many diverse elements to be harmoniously reconciled in one short reign. His view of the kingdom and kingly duty clashed sadly with that of Samuel (I Sam. xiii. 8—15; xv. 1—35). In the country were men who for one reason or another questioned the wisdom of his election (I Sam. xi. 12; x. 27). The Gibeonites proved to be such a thorn in the side of the new king that he had to put some of them to death (II Sam. xxi. 2—3).

But more serious still was the alienation of David, a youth of Judah. That there was some apparent occasion for Saul's jealousy may be suspected. There is no question but David appealed to the imagination of his countrymen.

Saul hath slain his thousands,  
And David his tens of thousands,

proclaimed the plaudits of the throng. Tribal jealousies do not die easily, and the yoke of Benjamin did not lie comfortably on the neck of Judah. Personal quarrels broke out, and David was compelled to leave the court and become an exile. Naturally he returned to his own territory, where the discontented joined his banner, and soon a considerable bodyguard stood ready

to obey his orders (I Sam. xxi.-xxiv.). He, with his little army, policed parts of the southland, and collected from those whom he protected the necessary support for himself and his men (I Sam. xxv.). By marriage he became the possessor of the rich lands of Nabal, the herdsman. Then, deeming it wise to leave Judah for a time, he subtly courted the favor of the Philistines. He raided the caravans and the communities of the south, deceiving Achish, and ingratiating himself into the good will of his fellow tribesmen (I Sam. xxvii. 1-12). Saul could not be over-comfortable with this campaign going on within his own borders.

However, his old-time enemies were the king's final undoing. The Philistines, a war-like people, did not readily let slip their possibility of empire. Perhaps after many minor conflicts in which they were more and more driven from the Israelitish territory, they rallied their warriors at Mount Gilboa in the eastern extremity of Esdraelon (I Sam. xxviii. 4-xxx.). That the two armies should meet here, so far from their respective home bases, indicates that both nations had been rapidly expanding and organizing their control over ever-increasing territory. Saul, moody and hesitating because of his mental malady, his hosts weakened by internal schism, was unable to lead to victory. His army was scattered, and with his sons he perished on the field of battle. Naturally, the Philistines thus became the overlords of the Israelites, and, while not interested in the internal administration of the country, they may have exacted tribute as the spoil that belonged to the victor.

While the character and the achievement of Saul did not appeal to the imagination of the editor of the books of Samuel, yet we can read the story of an heroic struggle amidst grave difficulties. The first king must bear the brunt of that adverse criticism that always falls on a new institution. His first task, that of unit-

ing Israel, a freedom-loving people with sharp tribal cleavages, was one that centuries failed to achieve. The call for battle was constant, and with the passing of the years, it grew more difficult to sustain the army either by voluntary or impressed forces. Further, the temper of the man, splendidly capable to rouse the whole country to meet a great and pressing emergency, as at Jabesh-Gilead or at Micmash, was such that he could not patiently carry on through the decades, amid the jealousies and the discords of the court, and the wavering fortunes of war. A passionate man, easily roused to great deeds or even swept away by the ecstasies of the prophetic band, he suffered those mental reactions that were very depressing. A modern psychologist might attribute the failure of his later years to an increasing melancholia. Tradition said he failed because he made bold to offer the sacrifice (I Sam. xiii. 14), or because he neglected to put the ancient ban into operation in the case of Agag (I Sam. xv. 28), or because he visited the witch of Endor (I Chr. x. 13-14), or because he slew the priests at Nob (Jos. Ant. vi. 14. 9). An early writer summarized it all when he said, "An evil spirit from Yahweh troubled him" (I Sam. xvi. 14). Yet with all his faults and mistakes, he laid the foundations of an army, widened and made more secure than previously the boundaries of Israel, united a larger number of tribes, and created more of a national spirit than had existed heretofore. Apart from the work of Saul, the kingdom of David would scarcely have been possible.

Notwithstanding its chaos, this was a period of rapid development. The farming class must have become a considerable body, while the roving nomad was ever finding less and less room for his movements (I Sam. xi. 5; xiii. 19-21). Private property in land, in farm produce, and in cattle was a great stimulus to ambition. The old equality was passing, and a new caste system

was developing. Division of labor was a growing necessity. Some men became landowners, others of necessity became servants. Some became professional soldiers, a few because of native gifts became leaders (I Sam. xiv. 52). The small retinue that formed the bodyguard of the king grew into the military and the court aristocracy. All was in transition. The farmer boy became a king, and the youthful shepherd a court musician and finally married the king's daughter. With the passing of the nomadic life the tent gave place to the house of sun-dried brick, built, no doubt, on the Canaanitish model. As a greater number of utensils could be used, pottery came into demand. The looms plied their trade faster to meet the growing needs of a settled population, and life, on the whole, became more and more complex.

Legislation grew apace with the demands. New cases required new decisions. Canaanitish custom, particularly in those things that pertained to agricultural life, would often help the Hebrew judge in his ruling. One decision made a precedent; a number of precedents established a custom; and a custom in due time acquired divine sanctions. The king was the new chief-justice, and his authority was as wide as the boundary of his kingdom, and as absolute as his military strength.

Religion, likewise, was in a state of turmoil. Old practices were still the order of the day. The teraphim, the use of the Urim and Thummin, oracle-giving, necromancy, and soothsaying, still formed part of the normal religious life. Taboos were considered important, and there was insistence on the ban. Yet we have a number of important departures. In the first flush of victory over the Philistines, Saul laid a taboo on the army (I Sam. xiv. 24). Refraining from food was for the purpose of permitting the divine strength to operate in man unhindered by contact with any



common substance. The idea was quite pagan. Jonathan, not knowing the curse that had been uttered by his father, ate a little honey and was refreshed. When his act became known, his father insisted on carrying out the curse to the letter. The people, however, whose affection for the young prince triumphed over an age-long superstition, rescued Jonathan that he died not (I Sam. xiv. 24-46).

In the same chapter we have the earliest record of the taboo on eating blood (I Sam. xiv. 30-34). The people in their hunger gorged themselves with the spoil, unmindful of what was the primitive practice of nomads, namely, that the animal must be offered to deity before its flesh could be safely eaten. Saul upbraided them, built an altar to Yahweh, and offered thereon the blood of each animal that Yahweh might have due recognition. This taboo is embodied in legislation in Deuteronomy xii. 16, 23, 25 and Leviticus xvii. 10-14.

Progress is also suggested by Saul's attitude towards the ban (I Sam. xv. 20-21). The ban, that is, the annihilation of the enemy and the destruction of all his property, was the law of early tribal life. This was often essential for the preservation of the tribe, owing to the desert law of blood revenge. Samuel and Saul came into sharp conflict over this ancient practice. Saul had a glimpse of a more humane ideal, but Samuel insisted on the well-known custom that had all the religious sanctions of history. The prophet won for the time being, and hewed Agag in pieces, and the king was branded as a rebel against the faith of his fathers (I Sam. xv. 22, 23, 32, 33). But later religious leaders vindicated the principle towards which Saul seemed to grope, and lawgiver and prophet agreed as to its worth (Dt. xxiv. 16; Jer. xxxi. 30; Ezk. xviii. 4).

It is possible that the place of the ark in religious thought, and the ritual surrounding it, also made some

gain. It was well housed. Showbread was constantly before it. An ephod, perhaps used chiefly for obtaining an oracle, was part of the sacred equipment (I Sam. xxiii. 2-15; xxx. 7-8; xiv. 18 LXX). To many the ark was equated with Yahweh, and there were those who seem to have regarded it as a fetish, possessing in itself power to injure or to bless (I Sam. iv. 3-22; v. 1-vi. 21).

The process of assimilating Canaanitish religious ideas must have gone on very rapidly in these days. The people were familiar with the Baal worship that was carried on on every hillside. This involved animal sacrifices and various votive offerings, all performed with the appropriate ceremonial. Spring and autumn festivals were celebrated with great gayety. Not only were the Israelites aware of all the phases of this worship, but in so far as they were farmers they must have participated in the agricultural and religious rites of their tutors. Further, the ritual of Yahweh worship, even where that differed from Baalism, would most likely take on color from that of its long-established neighbor. The construction of religious houses, as those at Shiloh and at Nob, would of necessity be under Canaanitish builders and ideals. That Canaanitish influence penetrated the Israelitish religious life, is assured by the actual conditions we find in later days.

*Prophecy*—Prophecy was emerging from little-known origins, and was laying the foundations for later religious leadership. While we assume that in respect to prophecy the Hebrews were not the imitators of other nations, we cannot forget that this was almost a world-wide phenomenon. Egypt had her noted prophet back as early as the nineteenth century B.C. Ipuwer was a preacher of righteousness, and the predictor of the coming of a good shepherd who would save a remnant of his people, as definitely as a Jere-

miah, or an Ezekiel (Breasted, "History of Egypt", p. 168) (p. 5).

Or again, in the Phœnician city of Byblos shortly after 1100 B.C. we have the record of a somewhat similar event. A young Phœnician, who was an attendant on the king, when suddenly seized with a divine frenzy, rebuked the king for his treatment of an Egyptian envoy named Wenamon, demanded in the name of the God that he should be summoned, honorably treated, and dismissed. The king, impressed by the prophetic ecstasy of the young man, gave heed to his command. Here on the soil of Palestine, a kinsman of the Hebrews uttered what he conceived to be the will of God, like a Nathan or an Elijah (Breasted, History of Egypt, p. 353). The Old Testament adds the name of Balaam, a non-Israelite, who possessed gifts that were often found in early prophecy (Nu. xxii.—xxiv.).

In early Israel some striking characteristics are seen in the prophets. Bands of prophets moved from place to place, and, partly under the influence of music and dancing, they developed a type of religious ecstasy that is often found amongst primitive peoples (I Sam. x. 5, 10–13; xix. 23–24). In this overflow of emotion they believed themselves, and no one questioned it, to be possessed by the spirit of God. Saul was seized by this spirit, and God gave him another heart (I Sam. x. 9–10; xi. 16). But nowhere is there any indication that moral results followed this possession. As in the case of Samson, where the same phrase is used, it may mean no more than the intensifying of the physical energies so that heroic deeds may be performed. Perhaps the main function of these prophets was to inspire the tribes to united, warlike effort for the defense of the nation and its God (cf. Jgs. iv., v.).

Samuel was honored by these schools, if he was not actually their leader. But he was greater than they.

He was a seer, according to the old term, but a prophet according to the later estimate (I Sam. ix. 9). He had achieved no little reputation in his own community as a clairvoyant (I. Sam. ix. 5-10). But as a voice-calling for unswerving loyalty to Yahweh, as a rebuker of some of the prevalent evils of his day, and as a shaper of national destiny, he was a worthy forerunner of the later great writing prophets.

*Literature and Art*—No extended inquiry need be made into the field of literature and art. The stage of civilization reached precludes anything but the most primitive. The excavator finds in the strata that belong to this period just what the book of Samuel presupposes. The Israelites had scarcely emerged as yet from the period of the judges, the period of confusion. The practical tasks gave no time for leisure or luxury. The oldest narratives of the books of Samuel give no hint of writing. These were the days of the storyteller and the singer. Tales were carried forward from the past by word of mouth, and new tales were born out of history. On the pilgrimages, at the festivals, and particularly at important shrines would these tales and songs be developed and perpetuated. Warlike activities would also invite the singer to celebrate the hero and the victory. But the scribe was not yet in the land, and literature must have been scant. A residuum of our Old Testament literature certainly takes color from this varied but primitive life. The riddles of Samson, in epigrammatic, rhythmic form, certainly belong to days such as these. Jotham's fable, brilliant and pointed, bears all the marks of genuineness (Jgs. ix). The Song of Deborah, so called because she was the heroine rather than the composer, takes its place amongst the most ancient Old Testament literature (Jgs. v.). If not composed and sung on the occasion of the battle, then it celebrated that victory at no distant date. Further, the fact that narratives and songs

may have been handed down by oral tradition for a century or more has not prevented us from gaining a very realistic picture of the actual historical conditions of the period.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE UNITED KINGDOM

DAVID, 1013—973 B.C.

I SAMUEL XVI. 1—I KINGS II. 11; I CHRONICLES II. 9-16; III. 1-9; XI.—XXIX. 30; RUTH IV. 18-22.

As in the case of the previous period, here again we have historical material that gives good evidence of coming approximately from the time of the events. These must constitute our norm as they are self-evidencing. With the establishment of the court at Jerusalem, when a scribe was imported from Babylon, there was a beginning of literary activity (cf. II Sam. xx. 25, Sheva, is a Babylonian name). As there had been little need of such services earlier, it is probable a native caste of scribes had not arisen. Now, the national organization with its established court and capital, and its international relationships demands scribal activity, and also some arrangement for the preservation of important documents. From now on we may expect a growing literature, much of which will give us light on the history.

#### A—THE HISTORY OF DAVID

David was a true son of Judah. The story of the origin of the tribe suggests that it was about half Canaanite, and that not of the noblest stock (Gen. xxxviii.). Though not the oldest, Judah had slowly,

through a long series of mishaps to the older groups, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, gained the position of leadership, and had finally absorbed their remnants (cf. Gen. xxxiv., xlix. 4; xxxv. 22). Its geographic position was such as to encourage infiltration of desert blood. Hence often important foreign elements had become incorporated into its life. Othnielites, Kenites, Jerahmeelites, and, most important of all, Calebites, at various times, perhaps some of them as late as the time of David, had joined their fortunes with those of the clans of the hill-country (Gen. xxxvi. 16-42; Jgs. i. 16; I Sam. xxvii. 10; xxx. 14).

Like his tribe David was of mixed blood. Added to the Canaanite strain, the genealogist records a strong dash of Moabite in his ancestry (Ruth iv. 18-22). Whatever the reason, this union of different races, the superior advantages of his Bethlehemite home, or a possible early association with Samuel and the school of the prophets, we find in David those excellencies that easily made him a leader, and gave him a name with which after-generations did not fail to conjure.

We have three different accounts of his entry into public life (I Sam. xvi. 1-3; xvi. 14-23; xvii: 1-58). The first is an account of his anointing by Samuel; the second, his appointment as musician to Saul; and the third, his combat with Goliath. To reconstruct in chronological order the course of his early history, from these documents, is neither possible nor necessary.

At the court he soon became a favorite with the crowd, the blood-brother of Jonathan, the husband of the king's daughter, and the armor bearer of Saul (I Sam. xviii. 2-4, 7, 16, 17; xvi. 21). Such popularity could not long remain undisturbed in the presence of the moody king. Admiration turned to jealousy, which in turn gave way to hatred, and the life of the young prince was in constant jeopardy. David,

loath to leave friends and court behind; remained till fully convinced that there was no hope of reconciliation with the passionate monarch (I Sam. xx. 1-11, 42).

As an outlaw he was pursued by Saul from one hiding-place to another. From Nob he went to Gath of the Philistines (I Sam. xxi. 1-14). Recognized here as a hero of Judah, he feigned madness, and escaped to the cave of Adullam (I Sam. xxii. 1). Discontented fellows and outlaws from all quarters gathered here, and made him their captain (I Sam. xxii. 2). Sending his parents across to Moab for protection, he then transferred his headquarters to the woods of Hereth (I Sam. xxii. 3-5). Learning that the Philistines were besieging Keilah, he hurried to the rescue of the city, repulsed the enemy, and for a time made the delivered city his headquarters (I Sam. xxiii. 1-6). But Saul's army was on his heels, and he had to flee to the wilderness of the south (I Sam. xxiii. 7-14). From place to place he was pursued. On one occasion he generously spared the life of the king who had fallen into his hands (I Sam. xxvi. 1-25; cf. xxiv. 1-22). On another, apparently during a cessation of hostilities, he greatly strengthened his fortunes by marrying Abigail, the widow of Nabal, the rich sheep-owner of Carmel in the Maon desert, south of Hebron (I Sam. xxv. 2-42). But Saul could not abide the man who turned every opportunity to his own advantage, and renewing his pursuit, drove him out of the borders of the country. Ziklag, a little Philistine village, then, by the grace of Achish, king of Gath, became the headquarters of David and his growing army for over a year (I Sam. xxvii. 1-7). While here he cultivated the friendship of the Philistine king, and supported his men by raiding the tribes of the south in the wilderness of Shur (I Sam. xxvii. 8-12). When the Philistine confederacy joined battle with Saul at Gilboa, David was prevented from fighting in their ranks,

owing to the quite justifiable suspicion of his sincerity (I Sam. xxix.). When, thus thrust out of the Philistine army, he returned to Ziklag, he found the city burned and pillaged by his ancient enemies the Amalekites. Hastily he followed the raiders, and completely defeated them (I Sam. xxx.). Always mindful of his own tribe, and perhaps with his eye to the future, he immediately sent his portion of the spoil to the elders of Judah and to those places that he and his men were wont to haunt (I Sam. xxx. 26-31).

With Saul and Jonathan dead, the remaining leaders of the house of Saul hiding east of the Jordan, and the army of Israel scattered, David was the one person to whom leadership belonged. He had proved himself on the field of battle and in the court, and now had a considerable army at his back. In a remarkable way he gained the good will of all classes. Through one of his wives he held important estates in the Calebite district of Hebron, and through another he was the son-in-law of the late king. He was no doubt the favorite son of his own tribe which had been constantly growing in importance. He had the support of the most important prophet of the day, and most likely this meant that the schools of the prophets were also with him. Even his relationship with the Philistines, who were now the masters of the land, could be made to favor his cause.

Shortly after Saul's defeat, having paved his way by his gifts, he marched to Hebron. Here, in this ancient religious center, the largest city of the south, he was proclaimed king (II Sam. ii. 1-4). Judah alone acknowledged his sovereignty at first. The house of Saul under Ishbosheth, Saul's fourth son, asserted its claim and set up its rule in Gilead. This weak king, crowned in Mahanaim, held nominal sway over the Gilead, Ephraim, Benjamin, Asher, and Jezreel, for a period of two years (II Sam. ii. 8-iv. 12), while

Abner, the captain of the army, was the real director of affairs.

But the ambition and the strength of David allowed no place for a divided Israel (II Sam. ii. 8—iv. 12). In fact, the leaders of each group were anxious for complete conquest. Abner led the hosts of Saul, and Joab, the sturdy, headstrong nephew of David, marshaled the ranks of Judah. The contestants met in Gibeon, halfway between their respective capitals. A drawn battle was the result. But Abner soon tired of being an instrument in the hands of a weakling, and aimed at gaining the supreme power. His first move was to take the concubine of the dead king for himself. Ishbosheth challenged the right of his first officer thus to assume the privileges and the inheritance of the former monarch. Abner hotly resented any interference, and pledged himself to transfer the whole kingdom to the house of Judah. After having concluded negotiations with David, this last considerable pillar in the house of Saul was treacherously slain by Joab. Shortly afterwards, his royal master was murdered by two of his captains.

Our documents do not fill in the complete story. Civil warfare continued for a period of seven and a half years. The house of Saul grew weaker and weaker, while the house of David rapidly grew stronger. What skirmishes and raids occurred we are not told. Gradually, most likely individually rather than in concerted move, one after another of the tribes of Israel offered their allegiance to the ruler in Hebron (II Sam. v. 3). Finally all Israel was brought into a closer national bond under David than it had hitherto attained.

*Military Tasks*—The new king of united Israel had before him three serious military tasks. The first was the reduction of the Jebusite fortress, which separated Judah from Benjamin and Ephraim, and thus made it



exceedingly difficult to hold the two parts of the country together as a political whole. The city was deemed impregnable, and hence the task was considered well-nigh impossible. Nevertheless, he easily captured it, increased its fortifications, and wisely, because of its strategic position as well as its neutrality in earlier Hebrew history, made it his capital city (II Sam. v. 6-10).

The second task was to throw off the yoke of the Philistines. As conquerors they no doubt had demanded the usual tribute. It is quite possible that both Ishbosheth and David made some contribution to their treasury during the early years. Beyond that, the overlords would take little interest in the affairs of the country. But national prosperity could never come to a subject people. It is possible that David made some move to shake off this foreign yoke. The Philistines seem to have thought all was not going well for their personal interest, for they brought their army up the valley of Rephaim, which runs almost up to Jerusalem. Here in two battles, by the use of strategy, Israel crushed the army of the uncircumcised, so that they were never again a menace to their neighbors (II Sam. v. 17-25).

The third duty was that of establishing the borders of the land, and consolidating the various tribal elements. Moab, Edom, Ammon, Zobah, and Syria, as well as the Philistines, each in turn felt the ruthless power of his army and submitted to his tribute (II Sam. viii. 2-8; xxi. 15-22). Yahweh gave to David the victory whithersoever he turned. Garrisons were placed in the outskirts of Syria and Edom, and the kingdoms of Hamath and Tyre gladly formed alliances with this vigorous, youthful nation.

Great indeed were the achievements of the king, but inevitably there was the backwash from the tide. This was felt most severely in the later years of his reign.

His troubles were partly tribal, partly domestic. Absalom's rebellion was of all, the most trying (II Sam. xiii.-xviii.). The lax hand of the loving father, noticeable in all his family relations, was accessory throughout all the revolt. The young traitor, by flattery, succeeded in starting the insurrection in Hebron, which could scarcely forget that David had removed the court from their city to Jerusalem. He then pushed on hastily to the capital. The king, with his private body-guard of six hundred, and a number of his servants, fled from the palace across the Jordan to Mahanaim. The two armies finally joined battle in the forest of Ephraim, and what might have been the end, but for the disobedience of Joab, is hard to say. Absalom the handsome, subtle, and treacherous prince, contrary to the command of the king, was slain by the less lenient, but perhaps wiser captain of the army.

In passing, we have the story of Shimei's ineffective but most malignant attack on the weary king as he fled to the desert for safety (II Sam. xvi. 5-8). It is a commentary on the smoldering resentment that still burned in the heart of Benjamin against the tribe that had gained the chief seat in the hegemony (II Sam. xvi. 9-14; xix. 16-23).

The attitude of the other tribes, particularly that of Ephraim, was likewise hostile. When David was restored to Jerusalem, a deputation from the east of the Jordan, and presumably from the highlands of Ephraim, went with him, and at Gilgal laid complaint against Judah. They charged the southern tribe with assuming undue prestige in national affairs, but "the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel" (II Sam. xix. 40-43).

Sheba, another Benjamite, deemed the time ripe for a general uprising. There seemed to be disaffection throughout the whole of the north country. He made an effort to crystallize this into active rebellion, and

to that end marched through the country northward. He was followed by the army of Judah, led first by Amasa, then by Joab, and was sieged in the far north in Abel-beth-Maacah. Rather than suffer the consequences of resistance, the inhabitants handed his head over to Joab, and the rebellion was quelled (II Sam. xx. 1, 2, 4-22).

The final dissension was upon the question of the succession. Adonijah, the oldest living son, and Solomon, son of the favorite Bathsheba, were the claimants (I Kgs. i. 1-53). Joab, the general of the army, and Abiathar, the priest, allied themselves on the side of the firstborn and the law of hereditary rights. Beniah, a leader in the army, Zadok, the priest, and Nathan, the prophet, ranged themselves along with Bathsheba, and appealed to the king to appoint his own successor. David, thus urged by a court faction, perhaps following his own personal inclinations, proclaimed the younger son king. Thus the mantle fell on Solomon, and in due time he became the inheritor of the territorial boundaries, the tribal aggregations, the autocratic military organization, the economic wealth, the ritualistic aspirations, as well as the remnants of the domestic and tribal feuds of his father.

The real greatness of David is hard to estimate. A warrior of great personal prowess, he was also a leader of amazing resourcefulness. He, who as an outlaw controlled six hundred reckless fellows, and gained a Philistine chief as a protector and patron, and as king kept in check the turbulent spirit of Joab, may well command the respect of after-generations. He had sagacity as well as strength. The campaigns planned and carried through successfully, the caravan lines commanded, and the garrisons established, the capital selected, and the cabinet organized, all indicate the statesman with a broad outlook.

The charm and the gentleness of the truly great

were his. At the court or in the camp, at home or abroad, he behaved himself wisely. He refused to be in any way party to the death of Saul or the murder of Abner or Ishbaal. His kindness to the lame Mephibosheth, and his lament for the fallen great no doubt won for him the hearts of many of his opponents. He was religious as religion was understood by his people. He sought to make the best possible provision for the care of the ark, he took an active part in the religious processions, he provided and offered the sacrifices as required according to the custom of the day, he was a friend of priest and prophet, and was loyal to Yahweh according to the light he had. It is no wonder that his opponents said he was "as an angel of God" (II Sam. xix. 27), that his friends said he was worth ten thousand of them (II Sam. xviii. 3), and that tradition reported that "whatever the king did pleased all the people" (II Sam. iii. 36).

### B—INTERNAL CONDITIONS

The internal conditions of the country were no less significant than the feuds and battles. Continuous military victories, such as those of David, which were in turn built up on those of Saul, could not be achieved apart from very definite internal changes that must have affected the life of the people. All this necessitated organization, and that must of necessity be of a military type. Under David, the military machine was perfected, and dominated every activity of national life. Central authority over all Israel now became a very real fact. The king was the head of the army. Joab, the general, was his appointee, responsible only to him. A bodyguard of six hundred men, mercenary soldiers apparently, had long been attached to the king's person (II Sam. xv. 18; I Kgs. i. 8, 10, 38). This was the nucleus of a standing army that

was ready at his beck and call. He had at least one hundred chariots, which he had captured in war, to grace his service (II Sam. viii. 4). That ample and regular support for the army and court was arranged for, is attested by the census (II Sam. xxiv. 1-9). Detailed duties were definitely assigned to different divisions and groups of the army (II Sam. xxiii. 13-38; xviii. 1).

Further, in the government of the country, the king was absolute. Assisted by petty judges throughout the land, he himself was the supreme judge. Before he came to the throne, when a dispute about the division of the spoil arose, he settled it, and "it became a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day" (I Sam. xxx. 24-25; cf. Nu. xxxi. 25). On more than one occasion he placed himself on record as opposed to old customs, and set in motion the current towards juster principles of action (cf. II Sam. xiv. 4, 11; iii. 31, 32). Not only was he judge, but he was the chief executive, and the army was his executive force. He handed over the seven sons of the House of Saul to the Gibeonites for their vengeance (II Sam. xxi. 1-9). As need arose he executed, or authorized, what he believed to be justice (II Sam. viii. 15). As the absolute monarch, his power was limited only by the strength of his army.

Absolute, military monarch that he was, the state was growing so rapidly, and there were so many interests other than directly military, that it was necessary for him to departmentalize the complex activities of his kingdom. To care for these needs, he appointed, as overseers, no doubt gradually as the demand arose, men who had proved their fitness for such tasks, and these became his private council or king's cabinet (II Sam. viii. 15-18; xx. 23-26). The functions of these new dignitaries of state are instructive, and they mirror the new range of national development. The



captain or captains of the army stand first, and no doubt were of first importance. Then are mentioned a superintendent of taskwork, a chronicler, a secretary, and a number of priests. Three of these offices were new, the superintendent of taskwork, the chronicler or the keeper of the archives, and the secretary of state. The offices are all self-interpretative and are signs of the times. The fact that the name of the scribe Sheva is Babylonian, throws light on the lack of literary attainment in Israel that fits in perfectly with the well-known cultural conditions of the time. This cabinet, all appointees of the king, were responsible to him and him only.

However, not only were the conquests and the organization military in their nature, but the whole life of the nation was of necessity dominated by the same spirit. The growth of economic resources, amazing in its development, was due to the triumphs of the battlefield. The army raided the border territories and that of revolting tribes, and reveled in the plunder (II Sam. iii. 22). The great trade routes through and round the country from north and south and from east and west with their rich traffic were all controlled by the army of David. Thus did the commerce of the neighbors pay tribute to Israel.

Hand in hand with conquest moved the industrial activity. The building trades flourished. Garrisons were established at the outposts, and palaces were built in Jerusalem. Other industries must have kept pace with the procession. Foreign architects and master builders were required. Material from foreign markets was needed for construction. Workmen from neighboring countries found employment in the growing Israelitish cities. There was need of a more efficient ordering of the man strength of the nation. The poorer Canaanites, as well as some of the Hebrews, were pressed into taskwork and became virtually

the slaves of the king. Some provision for the court retinue, other than that which was derived from plunder, from the king's lands, and from caravan tolls, seems to have been necessary as the country became more settled, and the retinue necessarily increased. Black-mail on a small scale was no novelty (I Sam. xxv. 2-8). Taxation, or a regular levy on the whole country, in a regular and well ordered fashion by a central authority was an innovation. A movement to effect this seems to have been behind the census taken by David (II Sam. xxiv.). To any such movement there must have been serious dissent. Any disaster occurring in the immediately succeeding years, could, to a religious mind, bear only one interpretation. The combined evidence of all our witnesses shows us a rapidly increasing population, a developing industry, a great growth of wealth, with a corresponding organization of the material resources of the country.

With such a social conglomerate, having no knowledge of the primary laws of sanitation, it would be a surprise if physical disaster could long be escaped. Palestine, though comparatively free from great epidemics, as it is open to the cleansing influences of both the desert and the sea breezes, and has never been able to sustain a very congested population, has, nevertheless, periodically been subjected to pestilence. We are then prepared to learn that plague, that ever dogs the heels of war and seldom is absent from the thronging metropolis, found in this new and motley multitude a fertile seed-bed. One such plague is reported to have swept the country from north to south, decimating its inhabitants. The tradition, with good religious intent, made it directly consequent on the new reorganization of the country which is indicated in the census (II Sam. xxiv. 15-16; cf. I Sam. vi. 19).

Another equally serious danger lay before this rapidly increasing population. With poor methods

of cultivation and no irrigation, all production depended on the "former" and the "latter" rains. Hence, famine was no unusual occurrence. Now, with the influx of workmen, the danger was doubly serious. Once, at least, the people were faced with starvation, and the leaders were driven to despair to cope with the situation (II Sam. xxi. 1; cf. xxiv. 3).

Socially we are now at the opening of a new chapter for the Israelites. Inside of a generation the whole complexion of society must have been revolutionized. Jerusalem, a Hebrew city for less than a generation, had become a world-emporium. It lay on the highway from Egypt to Assyria, and sustained close diplomatic relations with Tyre and Hamath. It was the center from which affairs from Dan to Beersheba, or perhaps better from Damascus to Elath, were directed. In dress and speech, in customs and peoples, it was now an epitome of the Oriental world. A new social *milieu* had arisen almost overnight. Here lived the king, and in the palaces were his favorite wives. The cabinet ministers and their families had their residences in the city. Diplomats from foreign courts were a common sight in the streets. Master merchants from great centers of commerce were in the city bazaars. A motley throng, master and slave, native-born and foreigner, rich and poor, grave and gay, all were there. In all this complexity the warrior king was the first figure, and his military officers were his chief courtiers. Whatever court functions there were, the rattle of the sword and the tale of bloody deeds had place along with the "singing men and women" (II Sam. xix. 35). Important as industry and the working man and his master were, even more important were the soldier and his captain. They were the pillars of state, and gave the norm to society.

The few glimpses the records give of the ethical customs are rather indefinite and inadequate. Even

here the king occupies the center of the stage, and military ethics are the order of the day. No doubt he was in this respect, as well as in others, the representative of the people and of the age. If he was not the best, he surely was not the worst, and he would seem to have been far more noble than the average. His sins, like his virtues, were those of a transition period under military rule. He was a man of blood. The barbarities he ordered cannot be condoned by a later day (II Sam. viii. 2, 4; xii. 31). Yet when we consider the brutalities that his neighbors practiced, he was eminently humane. Joab repeatedly shows more blood-lust than his uncle. The military life rendered the soldiery callous, and no doubt shocking deeds were of daily occurrence. Absalom patiently sought the life of his brother, and for years planned the overthrow of his father. Joab never let the life of a kinsman stand between himself and the object of his desire. A complete tale of the feuds and assassinations of these years would be a grim reflection on the price of national progress.

Sexual immorality was the second great sin of the age. In this also David was not guiltless. He was the first to introduce the Oriental harem into Israel, and he was not careful how he obtained his wives. Before he came to the throne he had at least three, and before he arrived in Jerusalem, six (II Sam. iii. 2-5). Later many were added as the result of international alliances and personal desire (II Sam. v. 13-16). The number of his concubines is not stated, though ten were left behind when he fled from Jerusalem (II Sam. xv. 16). That which is deepest rooted in our minds, however, is his intrigue with Bathsheba. Here he is the absolute monarch who will have his way. The few incidents that indicate the general moral tone of the community are of a similar type. Amnon forcing Tamar, and her protest, show that in

this transition period the nation had fallen upon hard days (II Sam. xiii. 1-19). In such a maelstrom of changing life and custom, ruled by soldiers, many of whom were foreign adventurers, in a land so near the sea, so close to the desert, both of which were havens for the criminal, we could not expect any great regard for virtue. Immorality and barbarity always accompany a military régime. Now, as has been well said, "the old morality based on tribal and family lines was going out, and the new morality based on a sense of national unity was not yet fully come."

There were, however, bright spots in the morals of those growing days. True, they may be called military virtues, but, strange as it may seem, most virtues find their basis in those qualities that make the soldier: courage, endurance, devotion, strength, and loyalty. No period is more lustrous of heroic deeds than this. From the acceptance of the challenge of Goliath to the enumeration of the thirty mighty men of David we have a continuous display of these qualities. Perhaps no story more adequately sketches the virile characteristics of the times than that of the three mighty men who broke through the Philistine encampment, to carry a drink of water to their thirsty master from the spring he had known as a boy (II Sam. xxiii. 13-17). It is here we see David's appreciation of human life and valor, and his deep religious spirit at greatest advantage.

But there is evidence that still nobler ideals were held in some quarters. The one story that is best known, but the ethical import of which is often misunderstood, is that of Bathsheba-Uriah. Strange it may seem to us, that which shocks us most, *viz.*, the social sin, is not the point of the story. The original censure, as the parable of Nathan makes quite clear, was directed chiefly, if not exclusively, at the king's high-handed seizure of the poor man's property (II



Sam. xii. 1-4, 9). It is that demand which we hear so insistently throughout the eighth-century prophets, the demand for the rights of the individual as against the oppression of a privileged class.

Little need be said here concerning the religious ideas of the time. They were inseparable from the military achievements, and the social and economic changes. Yahweh was never more of a war-god than now. All the victories of the army were credited to him (II Sam. viii. 6, 14). All the spoil of battle and the slaughter of the enemy were dedicated to him (II Sam. viii. 11, 12). He, like the military chief, was harsh and arbitrary. The king did as he pleased, unquestioned; then why should not Yahweh? Uzzah dies. Why? He has broken no moral law, defied no known ritual regulation. Then, why? Some one must find the cause, and what more likely than Yahweh's wrath because of some unusual act of his (II Sam. vi. 6-11). The rains are restrained, and famine and suffering are the result. Why the famine? Somebody in some way had displeased Yahweh (II Sam. xxi. 1-14). A pestilence scourged the land. Why? Some one has transgressed (II Sam. xxiv. 1-9). This early idea of a God, arbitrary and irresponsible, flourished in the atmosphere of an unquestioned military autocracy. Later, in the great prophets, we shall find this conception very much softened, and other and nobler characteristics take the place of first importance.

Religion on its formal side, built on old, well-established customs. There were many sanctuaries, as Hebron, Bethel, Gilgal, Bethlehem, and Mizpah throughout the land, all of which were equally legitimate for the devout worshiper. Tribes had their special centers, and families their special altars on which they offered the customary sacrifices with the simple ritual which they had inherited from the past. The patriarch still held the priestly privilege, though a

class of experts was arising. Zadok and Abiathar, the sons of Aaron, had become prominent figures (II Sam. xx. 25). David's sons were appointed to what would seem to be a coveted position in the priesthood, and a Jairite shared the honors with them (II Sam. viii. 18; xx. 25). The symbols of religion remained largely as they had been earlier, the Urim and Thummim, teraphim, the ephod, and the ark. Jerusalem, the chief city and the capital, now began to assume the place of first importance religiously. The ark was housed there, and as the appointments of religion should correspond to those of commerce and politics, all was ready for an advance at least in the externals of religion.

The question of the literature of the period is one that is worthy of most careful inquiry. Tradition has been kind to David. To sustain his great reputation in later days, the rabbis found it necessary to ascribe to him an immaculate conception (Targ. Ruth). To describe fully his contribution to Israel's life, and at the same time to stay within the bounds of fact seemed difficult. But the cultural background, as seen in the Old Testament and as deduced from the excavations, is quite conclusive. That the boy from the hills of Judah was a flute-player, a singer, and a composer of songs, there need be no dispute. These were part of the warp and woof of the time. The book of Samuel ascribes to him a lament over Saul and Jonathan, a lament over Abner, and a lament over Absalom (II Sam. i. 19-27; iii. 33-34; xviii. 33). These are secular songs, full of tenderness, imaginative in expression, and quite in keeping with the times and the character of the king. Our conviction is not so strong when we turn to the sample Psalm which is incorporated in II Samuel xxii. 2-51. Comparing this with Psalm xviii., we find we have two editions of the same poem with some 133 minor differences. One or both editions have suffered

much from editors. In its present form it cannot in its entirety go back to the early days of the kingdom. The ideal expressed in II Samuel xxii. 21-24, 25-28, and the historical background implied in vss. 44-46, belong to conditions much later than the time of David. If here we have a Davidic nucleus, it must later have been adapted to public worship, and have suffered as have most of our ancient hymns at the hands of interpreters. The question of the Davidic authorship of the 73 psalms ascribed to him in the Hebrew, or the 69 in the Septuagint will be discussed later. Suffice it here to say that, while few of these breathe the atmosphere, or express the spirit in which the David of the historical books lived, and moved, and had his being, it would be quite unwarranted to suggest that in the Psalms, as we now have them, there might not be a residuum that was Davidic.

## CHAPTER X

### THE UNITED KINGDOM

SOLOMON, 973-933 B.C.

I KINGS I-XI; II CHRONICLES I-IX.

SOLOMON, appointed to the throne by his father, duly anointed by Zadok, and protected by the royal mercenaries, was loudly proclaimed king by all the people (I Kgs. i. 38-40). Immediately he faced Adonijah and his supporters. His rival, placed on his good behavior, in a short time made the request for Abishag, the dead king's concubine, and Benaiah, at the command of Solomon, slew him for this evidence of disloyalty (I Kgs. i. 49-53; ii. 13-15). Joab, the old warrior, was not forgiven for his alliance with the usurper, and was slain while seeking sanctuary at the altar (I Kgs. ii. 28-35). Shimei, his father's enemy, at the end of three years was put to death for violating the prescribed bounds (I Kgs. ii. 36-46).

The Deuteronomic editor made the execution of Joab and Shimei David's final charge to Solomon (I Kgs. ii. 1-9). It is a strange interpretation. Why did David suffer Joab to live more than thirty years after the murder of Abner, if death was his due? What was David's oath of life to Shimei worth, if now he lays this command on his successor (cf. II Sam. xix. 23)? Why should Solomon be the executioner for his father? In another place we have the record of David's last words, and the purport is far different from this his last will and testament (cf. II Sam. xxiii.

1-7). The editor no doubt had grounds that seemed to him adequate, but all things considered, it looks like interpretation rather than sober history. Was it that the Deuteronomist, who loved the temple, thought that none but a man of peace was worthy to be considered its builder? Did his conception of rewards and punishments in this life compel him to believe that Joab and Shimei must have suffered for their past sins? It may be that this gruesome bequest of the dying king is an apologetic for both the sanctity of the temple and the stern justice of a righteous God. But this in no real way removes the stain of blood from the hands of Solomon. He must bear the responsibility for the death of Adonijah, and the banishment of Abiathar (I Kgs. ii. 27). Joab was also a conspirator against his sovereignty, and his personal safety alone would dictate the removal of such enemies. This, the putting out of the way of all rivals, was the usual policy of an Oriental despot.

*Revolting Nations*—Revolts of subject peoples occurred most likely at the beginning of his reign (I Kgs. xi. 14-25). Conquered Oriental nations almost invariably tested the strength of every new monarch upon his accession. Rebellion broke out both in Syria and Edom, but the story is not complete. Our editor was more interested in religion, and in the peace that characterized the reign of Solomon than in warfare. The port of Elath in the territory of Edom was used by Israel as a harbor, and thus was probably tributary to Solomon during the whole of his reign. Yet it is quite possible that neither Edom nor Syria rendered him the same allegiance that they had his father. The boundary lines and the tale of tribute are given in general terms, and may have something of an idealistic touch (I Kgs. iv. 21-25).

*Growing Commerce*—If, however, he was not so commanding a military figure among the bordering princi-



palities as his father had been, his world-renown far surpassed that of his predecessors. Commercially his reign proved nothing short of revolutionary. The king was the master middleman, personally controlling and benefiting from the land traffic. The merchandise passing along the caravan routes was better organized than hitherto. From Mutzri, in Asia Minor, far-famed for its fine horses, he brought horses by droves, and from Egypt he brought chariots, and sold each in the best markets (I Kgs. x. 28-29). He catered to the needs of the Hittite and Syrian courts (I Kgs. x. 29). He carried on an active spice trade with Arabia in the south, and caravans from the north and the east added their quota to his wealth (cf. I Kgs. x. 1-10; iv. 24). With Phœnicia his trade relations were the closest possible. Master workmen in brass and stone and wood, builders of ships and of palaces had to be brought from Tyre to beautify Jerusalem (I Kgs. vii. 13-14). A multitude of common laborers must have accompanied their masters, and much of the material for the building enterprises, fine wood, dyestuff, and gold, no doubt came from Tyre and Sidon (I Kgs. v. 11; ix. 11). Payment to Hiram of Tyre was always required (I Kgs. v. 6, 11; ix. 12).

Maritime traffic added still greater luster to his reputation. The ancient traditions told of Solomon's ventures on the Mediterranean and on the Red sea, in partnership with Hiram (I Kgs. ix. 26; x. 22). It is possible that the seaport of Gaza may have been used by Israel (I Kgs. iv. 24), and Joppa and Dor were likely open to them. What distant havens these merchantmen visited is not clear. Some have thought that the Mediterranean fleet may have visited the shores of Cornwall, England, for tin which was mined there about that time. The Red sea navy may have had contact with India. Ophir may be for Avira, an old name for the district at the mouth of the Indus. Cross-

country traffic, which for ages had been intermittent between India and Asia Minor, about this time had been penalized by Assyria and Persia. This perhaps stimulated the master merchantman to open up a water-way to obtain the apes, peacocks, and other commodities which were native to India.

*International Relations*—This world-wide commerce brought Solomon into political contact with the great nations of the day. His numerous marriage contracts were the public evidence of international treaties. Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites were all linked up with Israel in such political bonds (I Kgs. xi. 1-3). But an alliance with Egypt, the ancient world-power, was the crowning glory of Solomon, and his Egyptian queen was the undisputed mistress in the palace (I Kgs. vii. 8; xi. 1). While the aggregate of the harem does not suggest the report of a court statistician, in fact it has been suggested that seventy instead of seven hundred may have been the number of the wives, there is every reason to believe that it has a substantial historical background.

*Home Policy*—Such a foreign policy as above described was closely integrated with the home policy. It was a time of unwonted development and splendor. In Jerusalem the king carried through building operations, the like of which had never been conceived by Israel. On the eastern side of the city, by the aid of foreign architects, he planned and completed by the twenty-fourth year of his reign the great royal court (I Kgs. ix. 10; cf. vi. 11). This consisted of a group of buildings, six in all, only partly described in the book of Kings. They formed a large rectangle, and were completely surrounded by a substantial wall. Beginning at the south, where we find one of the main entrances, we pass into the house of the forest of Lebanon (I Kgs. vii. 2-5). This was a large hall, in

which, or over which, was provision for an arsenal (I Kgs. x. 17). Its chief use in later days seems to have been to accommodate those who gathered at the court for justice (Jos. Ant. viii. 13, 3). Passing through this, going northward, we enter the porch of pillars (I Kgs. vii. 6), which was a waiting room to the hall of justice (I Kgs. vii. 7). Here the king as the supreme judge held his court. Next in order, northward, stood the royal palace, and in the rear to the west lay the palace of the favorite queen (I Kgs. vii. 8). These two palaces were enclosed by a stone wall. North of this, connected by a door, lay the temple court, with the altar and temple, all likewise within a stone wall (I Kgs. vi. 14-37). All these six buildings lay within the great wall which formed an irregular quadrangle with perhaps two entrances, one from the south and the other directly east of the temple area. All this imposing pile, lying within the area of the outer wall, constituted the royal buildings.

While no other part of the country profited as did the capital, important outposts were fortified (I Kgs. ix. 17). Cities for horsemen, and cities for chariots were located at strategic points, and store cities were built throughout the land (I Kgs. ix. 19; x. 26). Thus was he able to control the caravan routes and defend the outposts of the country.

To keep pace with the development at home and abroad, the cabinet, which had been organized by David, was enlarged, and the personnel was changed (I Kgs. iv. 2-6). An extra scribe was added. A chief of the officers, and a superintendent of the household were also found necessary. The cabinet, still the appointees of the king, have now all attained the dignity of princes. No better illustration of the growing affluence and developing culture could have been preserved than this enumeration of the cabinet officers.

*Changing Customs*—Such prosperity, going hand in

hand with an increasing population, carried with it a number of disturbing elements. Foreigners with their foreign customs and religion flocked to the country as never before. They seem to have dominated the industry of the land. They were the master builders of cities and walls, of palaces and temple alike. They were the designers of the royal palace, and the craftsmen who were the experts in bronze and wood. One of the chief palaces was occupied by a foreigner. For more than a quarter of a century these foreigners must have exercised a most subtle sway, so it is probable that their influence was felt down to the most minute details of the customs and thought of the people.

Solomon loved pomp and pageantry. This strongly appealed to the youthful, national pride. His horses and chariots were the acme of his splendor. Many of the youths of the land appreciated the new glory because of the personal advantages they gained. But it must have been distasteful to many of the others who were peace-loving, peasant folk.

The vast wealth required to carry on all this show must be found somewhere. The building program was costly, and the daily outlay for his equipage helps us to visualize the current expenditure (cf. I Kgs. iv. 22-23). He must have had considerable personal holdings, but these would satisfy but a small part of the demand. His control of commerce helped to fill his coffers, but more was needed. Tribute still flowed from conquered kingdoms (I Kgs. iv. 21). But the demands of the kingdom were ever increasing. Tens of thousands of Canaanites and the poorer Israelites were reduced to taskwork to help meet the need (I Kgs. v. 13-16; ix. 20-21; xi. 28; cf. ix. 22). But the budget of the ambitious monarch lay still beyond the income from these sources. A genius for organization, he divided the whole country into twelve parts,

completely ignoring boundary lines, and omitting Judah. He put a commanding officer in charge of each division, and laid on each one the required victuals for the king and his household for one month (I Kgs. iv. 7-19; cf. I Sam. viii. 11-17). Still the credit side of the ledger exceeded the debit, and the resourceful king handed over twenty of his Galilean cities to Hiram of Tyre, who seems to have been his banker during most of his reign (I Kgs. ix. 11-12).

Thus the splendor of his reign had a somber background. There was great wealth, which was shared in by the king and his court, the officers, and the master workmen of the realm. There was great poverty as well. With more wealth in the country than ever before, vast multitudes had to slave and toil as their ancestors never had, under taskmasters who cared more for the work done than for the workmen. Another large group, the middle class, must have had to face a continual grind with only a meager existence, in order to meet the ever-increasing tax demands. To generations far removed from the scene of conflict, these were the golden days of Israel, but to many of those who participated in them, and in whose toil and blood the foundations were reared, there was a very different emphasis.

*Personal Characteristics*—Solomon was an Oriental monarch, and he established an Oriental kingdom. He was born in the court, and knew not the life of the common people as had his father before him. Though he was a forceful personality, it is quite unlikely that he possessed military skill. His was the gift of organization. Under his leadership the nation was equipped for business at home and abroad, as well as for defense. It is amazing that within a generation from the reign of Saul, the plowboy, those days of agricultural beginnings and constant tribal feuds, we should find a well-ordered realm, apparently united from Dan to Beer-



sheba, old tribal boundaries gone, commerce established with great world centers, palaces, temples, and cities that vie with those of ancient renown, a court, a harem, and a king reveling in a magnificence that might have been the product of a thousand years. Yet such is the scene amidst which we move in our study of Solomon. A wise king, yes, as that word was then used: wise in the subtle mastery of intricate problems, in riddles, in quick repartee, and in his control of men as well as situations. Wise in statesmanship? Scarcely! He built too rapidly, and his structure proved topheavy. Wise in morals, the fundamentals of personal character? He was perhaps as good or better than most of his generation. But he was overambitious and inconsiderate of his fellow men. Wise in the domain of religion? Loyal to his light, he no doubt was. A lover of ritual, his contribution to that side of religion was of supreme value, but it is possible that his conceptions of justice and kindness and humility would not stand at the bar of the eighth-century prophets.

*Literature*—From what has been said it is easy to reconstruct the inner life of the nation. Nothing need be added, touching the social and the industrial life of the people. But what of their literature? In the state we find that stable life, with those complex interests and specialized group activities, with the organization of the industrial, military, and political life, that creates at least a certain type of literature. No doubt scribes were hard at work, owing to the demands of business and politics. No fragment of such writing has remained to us, at least in its original form. But were there historians, part of whose efforts may have been preserved to us? It is not unlikely that much that refers to the early reign of David, as II Samuel ix.–xx.; I Kings i.–ii. 12, may have taken very largely its present form, if not in the time of

Solomon, then shortly after. Chronicles of the reign of Solomon were undoubtedly kept, but what their relation may have been to our present memoirs, or again to "the acts of Solomon," we cannot be absolutely certain (I Kgs. xi. 41). It is quite likely, however, that they contributed to the statistical and historical facts which were later used to give us our picture of the great king. Songs and hero-tales would very naturally grow up during these days. Genesis xlix. 2-27; Exodus xv. 1-18; Numbers xxiii. 7-xxiv. 9 are among the songs that because of content, language, and spirit are considered by many as belonging to this period. All celebrate some event in Israel's past and, as most singers do, the authors live over the old scenes, and even impersonate the chief character. Only the careful study of each poem in the light of history will enable us to fix the date, and that only in the most general way. But in these days of growing national consciousness and developing culture we may expect that the great facts of the past would be given permanent form.

Our interest is, however, specially directed to the king himself. Was he a literary man, and if so what have we from his pen? Tradition has magnified his wisdom. First it made him a natural scientist (I Kgs. iv. 33), and then it made him a legendary character by asserting that he understood the language of trees and birds, of beasts and creeping things. To find the assured basis of this is the serious task of the student. In the story of the dedication of the temple we have a brief dedicatory poem, which in every way is suitable to the occasion, and may well have been first uttered at this time (I Kgs. viii. 12, 13). The Septuagint has preserved the more complete form, and when reconstructed reads as follows:

The sun has Yahweh placed in the heaven;  
He, himself, he said, will dwell in darkness;

I have built thee a lofty house,  
A dwelling place for thee for ever.

It is important to notice that the Septuagint also adds, "is it not written in the book of the song." This suggests that at one time, this stood alone as the complete prayer of the king at the time of the dedication services. As such, it is quite appropriate. However, when we seek further for the dedicatory prayer, we find two editions (I Kgs. viii. 22-53 and II Chr. vi. 12-42). When we compare these two we note that the editors, or at least one editor, took great liberties with the text. The differences are as marked as the similarities. When we look into the spirit as well as the content of each, we find the first molded by the phraseology and ideal of Deuteronomy, and the second by that of the priestly school. We see further that neither expression is quite appropriate in the lips of Solomon.

From this we can readily pass to the question of the Solomonic authorship of Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. That Solomon was in one way or another the source of that upon which later days enlarged is probable. Some of the proverbs fit well with his experiences and his outlook. Many of them contain worldly wisdom that measures up to the range of his life. Many of them are sharp sayings of the type in which he most probably indulged. The Song of Songs could be fitted into his experience, and he is the central figure in at least one of the songs. The same in general might be said about Ecclesiastes. But such facts do not give evidence of authorship. These books will each be studied later (cf. pp. 308-311), but the language and the spirit of them as they now stand, is largely foreign to the age and the outlook of Solomon as it has been preserved in history. They are, in fact, much closer to those interbiblical books that also bear

his name: the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Psalms of Solomon. The present title may have been attached to them in exactly the same way as to the latter.

*Religious Life*—Those influences that made for change and revolution in civil affairs played a no less significant part in religious life and thought. Ushered into official life by one prophet, and his downfall predicted by another, we hear no prophetic voice during the whole reign of Solomon. His conduct of national affairs was so closely organized and so thoroughly dominated by himself that there was no place for the dissenter. Nor would we be surprised if this new, gorgeous civilization shocked the nomadic ideals of the prophets into a temporary silence. But many minds must have pondered the unequal economic conditions that grew apace in the realm, and the inherent injustice of these conditions formed a definite background for later messages.

The growing cosmopolitan type of population directly affected the religion. Previously Yahwism had rubbed up against Canaanitish Baalism, and had assimilated some of its features. Now the doors were opened to the world, and every little community with its peculiar customs crossed the threshold. Sanctuaries were erected for Chemosh, God of the Moabites, and for Molech, God of the Ammonites, as well as for others, in the city of Jerusalem (I Kgs. xi. 7). But the influence of Egypt, through the favorite queen, and of Tyre, through her numerous expert workmen, were the most potent. Two types of religious thought resulted from this ferment. One group grew tolerant, adapted themselves to the situation as they found it, absorbed somewhat of all they met, lost many of their old convictions, and produced a new type of life and thought. The other group reacted in the presence of the strange and foreign, clung tenaciously to their old methods, forms and names, and became propa-

gandists for the ways of their fathers. A clash between the old and the new was inevitable; in fact, it had a real function to perform in the religious life of Israel.

Of no less importance than the foregoing was the building of the temple. Here was a new and far-reaching development in Yahweh worship. Hitherto Yahweh had not dwelt in a house, but had dwelt in a tent and in a tabernacle (II Sam. vii. 6). With the dedication of the temple, the days of the simplicity of worship were numbered. Here an ornate ritual in keeping with the new building must develop. Sacrifices must increase in number and in type. The priesthood must become specialists, and their services must keep pace with the environment. As the years pass the Jerusalem sanctuary will attract worshipers from all parts of the country, and the old sacred shrines with their simple forms will suffer gradual eclipse.



# CHAPTER XI

## THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

THE FIRST PERIOD, 933-887 B.C.

### THE KINGS

<i>Israel</i>		<i>Judah</i>	
Jeroboam I	933	Rehoboam	933
		Abijah	920
		Asa	917
Nadab	915		
Baasha	913		
Elah	889		
Zimri	887		

I KINGS XII.-XVI. 15; II CHRONICLES X.-XVI.

### A—ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE

FIVE distinct sources were used for this and the subsequent part of our history. (1) The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel, and (2) the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah were histories of the north and the south, respectively, which drew immediately upon the court annals that were kept in the archives of each kingdom. The authors must have had direct access to the original records. Whether they copied them verbatim, what proportion of the material they omitted, or what, if any, they added, we do not know. That each book contained much more than the compiler of our present book of Kings used,





and that each was a narrative of historical events of its respective nation, is quite clear. That the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel was written after the fall of Samaria, 722 B.C., and the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah was not concluded much earlier than 600 B.C. is apparent, because of events included in our quotations from the books. The last appeal made to either book refers to the completed reign of King Jehoiakim, who ruled from 608 to 597 B.C. (II Kgs. xxiv. 5).

• The third source is the vivid, picturesque Elijah and Elisha stories, consisting of Ej., I Kings xvii.-xix., xxi.; II Kings i. 2-17, and Es., II Kings ii., iv. 1-vi. 23; viii. 1-15; xiii. 14-21, respectively. These stories must have taken their present form somewhere about 800 B.C. That is, they must have preceded Hosea (cir. 750 B.C.) as they are quite unaware that any guilt attaches to the worship at northern shrines.

• Another source, closely related to Ej. and Es., consists of a number of narratives that are interested in military activities in Israel (I Kgs. xx., xxii. 1-38; II Kgs. iii., vi. 24-vii. 20; ix., x.). They are more racy than the usual official chronicle, less religious, and more political than the Ej. and Es. stories. They are rather a popular history of some of the critical episodes in the life of Israel. Their vividness suggests an origin near the events described, perhaps earlier than 800 B.C.

• The fifth source, II Kings xi. 4-20; xii. 4-16; xvi. 10-18; xxii. 3-xxiii. 24, whose supreme interest is in the temple, is supposed by some to come from the temple archives, by others to belong to the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah. The common interest of the four passages is unmistakable, the exact origin at best can only be hypothetical, but in any case they are source documents, and were contemporary or nearly so with the events.

These five sources, which indeed constitute the

major part of the book, and the chief, if not the only, source of our history, are all that have been preserved from the original documents. No doubt the editor had much more material of each of the types, but these suited his purpose, which was religious rather than historical. Who he was, what was his purpose, and when he lived, are questions that are easily answered. We are already familiar with the Deuteronomic school, and here again we find their phraseology and their spirit (cf. I Kgs. xiv. 22, 23; xv. 14; xxii. 43, with Dt. xii. 1-3). That an edition of the book was completed before the exile, 597 B.C., is evident from many passages (cf. I Kgs. ix. 3; xi. 36; xii. 19; II Kgs. xviii. 19, 22; xvi. 6). The editor is responsible for the condemnation of the kings (I Kgs. xiv. 22, 23; xii. 28, *et al.*). He also introduced the present strange chronological scheme which is now the framework of the book (*e.g.*, I Kgs. xv. 1, 2, 9-11, etc.). This follows a regular system, the date of the accession of a king is given by comparison with the years of the reign of the contemporary king in the other nation. Thus the editor zigzags from one kingdom to the other on the crowning of each ruler.

There are some features that indicate a still later revision, also by a Deuteronomist. A number of passages look on the exile as a certainty (II Kgs. xx. 17-18; xxi. 10-15; xxiii. 27), and others view it as already having taken place (I Kgs. ix. 7-9; II Kgs. xvii. 19, 20; xxiii. 26; xxiv. 3). The two last chapters deal with Nebuchadrezzar and his relation to Judah, while the last one tells of the fall of the city and the captivity in 586 B.C., and concludes with the privileges that were granted Jehoiakin in Babylon in the year 561 B.C. The year 550 B.C. would then be the approximate date at which the final editor brought the book up to date by occasional insertions throughout the book and the concluding chapters. The book must



have passed through many scribal hands at later periods, but it suffered very little by way of interpretation or interpolation. One reason for this was that the priestly school found it altogether inadequate for their historical purposes, and while they used it freely for their new history of Israel, *viz.*, Chronicles, they left it practically untouched. Hence our problem of the historical value of the book is a comparatively simple one.

### B—SKETCH OF HISTORY

The disruption of the monarchy was not so sudden as might appear. The causes lay far back in history. The tribal divisions were ancient and deep-rooted. Different origins, different racial elements assimilated, different development because of environment, together with the Canaanitish settlement between the north and the south, all aided in producing a permanent cleavage. The official union under Saul and David failed to prevent constant friction and jealousy. The innovations of Solomon were felt severely by Ephraim. There the burden of taxation fell, for in the north was the greatest wealth. The new land division disturbed old relationships, and left Judah, the tribe of the king, exempt from the burdens of the kingdom. An absolute monarch, ruling in true Oriental fashion, could not satisfy the independent Ephraimites, who had ever struggled for the place of leadership. Nor did the religious innovations, the new temple, and its ritual easily win the assent of the democratic north. A prophetic outburst in the vicinity of Shiloh, reported indeed by the Deuteronomic editor, nevertheless, suggests that throughout the country the spirit of revolt was rife (I Kgs. xi. 29-39 D.). Then Rehoboam's arrogant response to the overtures of the Shechem council made the continuance

of the union unthinkable (I Kgs. xii. 6-11). The smoldering rebellion burst into flame. New indignities added to old oppressions were intolerable. The slogan, "What portion have we in David? to your tents, O Israel," was raised (I Kgs. xii. 16). Adoram, an officer over the taskwork, the messenger of the king, was stoned. Rehoboam and his bodyguard fled posthaste to Jerusalem. Jeroboam, already an approved leader in the north, had been exiled in Egypt because Solomon had feared an insurrection. He had been recalled, and was now summoned to an assembly by the people, and crowned king over Israel (I Kgs. xii. 20).

Two results immediately followed. All the tributary nations, Syria, Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Philistia, gained their independence, as Rehoboam was unable to command them. Also the schism that opened with bloodshed was continued by civil warfare. As no battle is mentioned and no details are given, we may assume that between Rehoboam and Jeroboam there were only indecisive skirmishes (I Kgs. xiv. 30; xv. 7; cf. xii. 21-24 P.). Later the hatred became so bitter, and Judah so intrigued with foreign powers, that the destruction of both nations was compassed.

Judah, which had absorbed the tribe of Simeon, as well as Calebites, Kenites, and the Jerahmeelites, was a small territory, with rocky, barren soil, and from now on she lived under the shadow of her stronger, wealthier neighbor, Israel. Her inheritance was the memory of two great kings, who had laid the foundation of her one ruling dynasty, the house of David, and her possession of the one splendid city in all Palestine. Yet her barren hillsides, her bleak exposures, and her wide outlook, had also compensations in their influence on the moral fiber and spiritual fervor of her people.

Military activities, important to both nations, were almost uninterrupted. Egypt had a strong ruler,

Shishak, or Sheshonk, not the father-in-law of Jeroboam, but the first of a new dynasty, who was eager for conquest in a territory that centuries before had belonged to Egypt. A disunited Israel gave him his opportunity, and he raided the country. Our narratives tell us he conquered Jerusalem and robbed the temple in the fifth year of Rehoboam, *i.e.*, 927 B.C. (I Kgs. xiv. 25, 26). But the Egyptian contemporary records on the south wall of the temple at Karnak add substantially to the story. Here is preserved a list of the captured cities, and a number of these, as Taanach, Shunem, Mahanaim, Gibeon, Bethhoron, Aijalon, Megiddo, and Beth-Anoth, belong to the north. We may conclude from this that the campaign was not directed solely against Jerusalem by a power friendly to Jeroboam, but was against the whole land, and that for the sake of Egyptian prestige. However, she did not again interfere with Palestine during this period.

In 918 B.C. Abijah succeeded his father as king of Judah, and continued the hostilities against Jeroboam, but with little success (I Kgs. xv. 7). The account in Chronicles of a great battle when Abijah took three cities, Bethel, Jashanah, and Ephron, from Israel is throughout in the editor's own language, and has no support in other sources. It is, at least, unquestionably overdrawn (II Chr. xiii. 3-21).

Nadab, who succeeded Jeroboam in 915 B.C., had a short and troubled reign (I Kgs. xv. 25-28). He attacked the Philistines, who had a stronghold in Gibeon on the west frontier of Ephraim. But trouble was brewing in the camp of Israel. Jeroboam had suffered inroads from Egypt. Hereditary monarchy did not sit lightly on the congeries of the ten northern tribes. Baasha of the tribe of Issachar, a general in the army, slew his master, and was crowned king in 913 B.C. He then slew the whole house of Jeroboam, and

proceeded to strengthen the kingdom. He began to fortify Ramah, an important caravan intersection, only six miles north of Jerusalem (I Kgs. xv. 16-21). For both defensive and offensive purposes, this was strategic for Israel, but it contained a threat to the south. Asa, the third king in Judah, who began to rule in 916 B.C., interpreted this in the most natural way and, considering only his immediate need, made overtures to Benhadad of Syria to break his previous alliance with Israel and come to the aid of Judah (I Kgs. xv. 18-21). The king of Damascus readily assented, sent his armies into northern Israel, captured Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-Macaah, the Galilee region, and all of Naphthali, and thus opened up for himself a much-coveted outlet to the sea. Thus there was lost to Israel most important territory, and there began a little before 900 B.C. what has been aptly termed "the hundred years' war between Syria and Israel."

To meet this attack Baasha had to move his army to the north, and this gave Asa an opportunity he could not let slip. He rallied all his people, and carried off the stone and timber his enemy had collected at Ramah. Some of this material he reërected at Geba, about a mile eastward of Ramah, where he commanded the best approaches from both the north and the south, and made it the northern outpost of Judah, while the rest he transported to another fortification at Mizpah on the northwest frontier (I Kgs. xv. 22).

Asa's strength is further celebrated in Chronicles, where in the usually glowing style of the author, he is credited with having defeated Zerah, the Cushite, with great slaughter (II Chr. xiv. 9-15). There is good evidence of the existence of an Arabian tribe of Cushites. This may be the memory of one of their raids on the southland which was repulsed by the good king.

Baasha, the usurper in Israel, was succeeded by his

son Elah in 889 B.C., who in the following year, with all his house, fell by the hand of Zimri, who was captain of half of the chariots (I Kgs. xvi. 8-14). Zimri, the assassin, had short shrift, as Omri, captain of the host that was then sieging Gibbethon, marched to the palace, and burned it to the ground. Here Zimri, a king for seven days, perished.

### C—NATIONAL CONDITIONS

During this half century national conditions of both kingdoms were a sorry picture. Economically the eclipse had been immediate. Tribute gone, control of merchandise lost, income from taxation reduced, slave work greatly lessened, both north and south alike had been reduced to straits. Shields of gold in the south had been replaced by shields of copper, and the tents of Israel now took the place of palaces. In both countries they were again at the beginning of things, and before each lay a long struggle for wealth and authority. The social life had been reduced to much simpler forms than in the preceding reign. The north, particularly, had reverted almost to the early peasant type. No permanent site was selected as capital. Jeroboam at first settled in Shechem and fortified it (I Kgs. xii. 25). Then he moved across the Jordan, perhaps influenced by the presence of the Egyptian army, to Penuel (I Kgs. xii. 25), and later he returned to the west side of the river, and settled in Tirzah (I Kgs. xiv. 17). He had no harem, and we have no notice of anything approaching a cabinet. The army was the power in the land, and in less than half a century, three kings had been slain and the throne occupied by army officers. It was a military despotism without so commanding a figure as David or Saul to direct the line of battle.

In religion there was reaction in both countries.



Jeroboam and the north did not forsake the worship of Yahweh. The name Yahweh formed part of his son's name, Abijah. The prophets had selected him as king before the disruption, and supported him throughout his reign. The people, who, no doubt, continued to be worshipers of Yahweh, maintained their confidence in him to the end. But he led the people in revolt against the new movements that had developed in Jerusalem under Solomon. He established a sacred festival for all the people (I Kgs. xii. 32, 33). He restored and dignified the worship at ancient shrines that had been threatened with eclipse by the innovations at Jerusalem (I Kgs. xii. 27-31). At some of these sanctuaries, the sanctions of which ran back to the time of the patriarchs, he constructed some kind of temple (I Kgs. xii. 31). Two places, held in peculiar reverence from early days, were singled out for special honor, Dan and Bethel, and in each one he erected a bull of gold (I Kgs. xii. 27-31). In this he was following ancient custom. Worship under such forms was almost universal among the Semitic people. Indications show that Israel, in her early nomadic days, used many of the same religious forms as her kin. The twelve oxen bearing up the brazen sea in front of the temple (I Kgs. vii. 25), the oxen supporting the canopy in Ezekiel's vision (Ezk. i., x.), and the strange bull forms woven on the veil of the Holy of Holies (Ex. xxvi. 31; cf. I Kgs. vi. 29, 23) most likely were associated definitely with past forms of worship. Indeed Yahweh himself was at one time represented by and spoken of as a bull (Ex. xxxii. 5). Whether Jeroboam was influenced by early Hebrew, nomadic customs, or whether it was the immediate influence of Canaanitish worship with which they had been familiar for approximately three centuries, we can scarcely question that the purpose of these symbols, to his mind, was the worship of Yahweh.

He also made priests from among the common people that were not of the tribe of Levi (I Kgs. xii. 31). This was democratic. It was the ancient practice from patriarchal days. Until after the days of Solomon we find men from all the tribes acting as priests, with a good conscience and without criticism. In Jerusalem, Abiathar and Zadok, sons of Aaron, had preëminence, and were the basis of a new order. In this action Jeroboam, though criticized severely by a later generation, but followed the way of the fathers. An unnamed prophet is made the mouth-piece of a Deuteronomic condemnation (I Kgs. xiii. 1-34), but if we blame him for his religious activity, it must be on the score of his conservatism.

This was a time in which the prophets could breathe. So we meet Ahijah, Jehu, and Shemiah, while a number of anonymous prophets are the bearers of important messages. A careful study of all these makes it difficult to tell how far the prophets of his own day were with the king at the close of his reign. We are, however, not left in any uncertainty as to the judgment of the compiler, who was the inheritor of the later prophetic ideals.

In the south, the history of religion was different. The splendor was gone, but the temple still remained. The population to which it ministered was much smaller than previously, hence it was more central to its constituency. The population was cut off from world-life, hence outside influences did not now play on Jerusalem and the temple as of yore. Thus the religious coördination of all of Judah was easily possible. Further, as the temple was the one outstanding feature in the life of Judah, their one glory, we may expect the development of more intense religious conceptions. Later we shall see that it was from Judah, and usually from the temple itself, that there sprung most of the reform movements of Old Testa-

ment history. One such movement, perhaps the least significant of all, but blazing the trail for others, was fathered by Asa (I Kgs. xv. 12, 13). It is reported that some of the most licentious rites that were associated with worship were forbidden, and some of the devotees were banished from the land. This was the beginning of a long history of the purification of the worship of Yahweh.

The work and the attitude of the editor of the books of Kings needs a further word of explanation. He condemned all the kings of Israel without exception, and that because of the worship that was carried on outside of Jerusalem. All the kings of Judah until Josiah are blamed for permitting the hillside worship to remain. It is evident that this condemnation comes from an idealist of a later day, and that it is not the judgment of a contemporary. The point of view of the editor is correct. It is the testimony of history. The hillside worship, both north and south, as well as the calf-worship at Dan and Bethel, did lead to licentiousness. These places were open to all the corrupting influences of Canaan and Phoenicia. Each altar was independent, and its customs were developed under the local priesthood. All this led to loose practices and to very imperfect views of deity. It is true that these high places, as Bethel, Shiloh, Nob, Hebron, and many others, had long been held sacred because of the religious experiences and worship of their ancestors in these places. They had always been considered legitimate. But the days of Jeroboam were new days. Changes had come, progress had been made, and new dangers were present. Jeroboam, a national leader, should have had broader vision than the early patriarchs. He should have been a leader in spiritual worship. But the old ways suited him. By clinging to them he was able to hold his people. In so far as he might have done better, marking a forward step

rather than beating time, he was blameworthy. But that would be asking a king to be a prophet and a martyr, and a man in the tenth century B.C. to have the vision of a man in the seventh. The editor of our documents was not interested in the kings or their achievements in the light of the moral and religious conceptions of their own age, but visited on them the condemnation of his own age.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

THE SECOND PERIOD, THE OMRI-AHAB DYNASTY,  
887-842 B.C.

#### THE KINGS

	<i>Israel</i>		<i>Judah</i>
Zimri	887	Asa	917
Omri	887		
Ahab	875	Jehoshaphat	876
Abijah	853		
Jehoram	851-842	Ahaziah	843-842

I KINGS XVI. 16—II KINGS IX. 28; II CHRONICLES  
XVII.—XXII. 9

#### A—HISTORICAL SKETCH

THE half century preceding Omri was one of chaos and loss. Omri, not only a soldier, but a statesman as well, turned the tide (I Kgs. xvi. 17-28). The book of Kings allots to him only thirteen verses, and only one-third of this is drawn from the annals, yet so great were his achievements that for a century the Assyrians called all Palestine the "land of Omri." During his twelve years' reign he at least laid the basis for national strength. Early in his career he suppressed a local uprising in favor of one Tibni, who is otherwise unknown. He held the Philistines in check. He strengthened his country by an alliance



with Tyre, marrying Ahab, his son, to Jezebel, daughter of Ithbaal, king of Tyre. He at least paved the way for happy relationship with Judah. The testimony comes from Moab that "Omri was king over Israel, and oppressed Moab a long time, for Chemosh was wrath with his land" (Moabite stone). The song in Numbers xxi. 27-30 is thought by many to celebrate this ancient victory, which is not referred to in the historical books. But his genius is seen in his selection and his fortification of the hill of Samaria, where he built his capital city. Because of its central location and its possibility of defense, it was the most strategic place in the land. With all his strength, he was nevertheless unable to meet Syria on even terms, and was compelled to grant her certain commercial privileges in the city of Samaria (I Kgs. xx. 34).

Ahab, his son, was a man of the same spirit (I Kgs. xvi. 29—xxii. 40). He prized the alliance with Tyre, and entered into a similar compact with Judah, his daughter Athaliah being given in marriage to Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat of Judah. In 856 B.C. the Syrians penetrated the country as far as Samaria, but were put to flight with great slaughter (I Kgs. xx. 1-25). The next year they again attacked, but were met at Aphek, perhaps east of the Sea of Galilee, and were again routed by Ahab, Benhadad, the Syrian king being captured (I Kgs. xx. 26-34). Ahab let the enemy off lightly, too lightly indeed for some of the fiery spirits of the country (I Kgs. xx. 35-43). The immediately following events, however, suggest that the king acted wisely.

Assyria had been rapidly gaining strength for a half a century, and had been sending her conquering hosts north and south and east. Between 860 and 855 B.C., in three great campaigns, she had reduced the peoples lying between Nineveh and Damascus to subjection. Some twenty years before this her armies

had reached the Mediterranean, and she had exacted tribute from all northern Syria. She was again ready to claim her ancient territory, and in 854 B.C. her armies were on the march. The little kingdoms of Syria must have seen the gathering cloud for some years, and now a hasty alliance was arranged. Benhadad of Damascus, Ahab of Israel, who had ten thousand soldiers and two thousand chariots, according to the Assyrian statistics, and their allies, eleven Syrian kings in all, with their armies marched north to intercept the invader. They met the army of Shalmaneser II at Karkar in 854 B.C., one of our earliest fixed dates, and engaged in battle. The Assyrian annals claim a complete victory, but it was probably rather indecisive, as it was five years before they again risked a campaign in the west. It was not likely a Syrian victory, for the Old Testament gives no hint of it.

In 853 B.C. we find Israel again at war with Syria, its recent ally. Apparently Benhadad had not lived up to the terms of the treaty of 856 B.C., for he still occupied Ramoth-Gilead (I Kgs. xxii. 3). Ahab called his ally Jehoshaphat of Judah to his assistance and, though warned of disaster by Micaiah, the prophet, he laid siege to the city (I Kgs. xxii. 1—xxiii.). Though disguised, owing to his fear, the king of Israel was slain by accident, and the day was lost. His sons, Ahaziah and then Jehoram, in turn ruled, but neither was able to stem the tide of defeat. Moab freed herself on the death of Ahab, and an attempt to reduce her to submission proved futile (II Kgs. i. 1; iii. 4—27; cf. Moabite stone). Syria most likely overran the country from 853 until 849 B.C. From 849 until 839 B.C. Shalmaneser II of Assyria hurled his army four times against Damascus, and so crippled her power that for a quarter of a century she did not molest Israel or Judah. In Israel, however, partly because of the inefficiency of the rulers, partly owing to the religious

and the political cleavages, the house of Omri was doomed.

*Economic Growth*—Economically, however, the north had made considerable gain. The lavish tribute exacted from Moab, one hundred thousand rams and the wool of one hundred thousand lambs, must have greatly assisted in the development of the country. Omri did considerable building, Ahab did more. Jericho was rebuilt, and thus Israel controlled and was benefited by the traffic from the east of the Jordan (I Kgs. xvi. 34). It was a time of increasing luxury, and the king's palace in Esdraelon (I Kgs. xxi. 1), and the ivory palace of Ahab in Samaria (I Kgs. xxii. 39) were but signs of the times. The excavations conducted by the University of Harvard, beginning 1908, actually uncovered what may be the foundations of Ahab's ivory palace, and in many ways corroborate this picture. If Omri might be called the David of Israel, then Ahab somewhat closely approximated the Solomon, and the glories of the earlier reign were in part duplicated in Samaria.

Judah lived under the shadow of Israel, and shared partly in her prosperity. Jehoshaphat planned to emulate Solomon as a master of merchant marine, but failed (I Kgs. xxii. 48). She also suffered the loss of her chief tributary states, Edom and Libnah, after the death of Jehoshaphat (I Kgs. xxii. 47; II Kgs. viii. 22). A wave of prosperity was perhaps followed by one of depression.

## B—RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

But the religious struggle was the most significant of the period. Our records preserve a wealth of detail and interpretation. It was during these years that there came the climax of a long period of association with, and assimilation of, neighboring worship.

The religion of Canaan was essentially a nature worship. Male and female deities, Baal and Baalath, the givers of fertility were worshiped. The bull and the cow were their symbols. At the chief agricultural seasons, seeding time and harvest, religious festivals were held. Sacrifices and agricultural products were offered the gods, and many indulged in licentious rites. This worship was part of the necessary agricultural duties of the farmer. Hence it must have penetrated most of the Israelitish life.

With Omri and Ahab we pass into another stage of the struggle. Israel had seen Phœnician religion at close quarters since the time when Solomon had so many Tyrians in his employ. Now, Tyrian Baalism was the religion of the one queen of the land. Jezebel, a woman of purpose and strength, the daughter of Ithbaal, the priest of Melkart, who had usurped the throne of Tyre in 888 B.C., had brought her gods, Melkart and Astarte, with her to Samaria. Altars must be erected for them, and their priests must come to perform their ritual. It is possible that Ashera, the symbol of the female deity, were erected beside all the altars. Hence Tyrian Baalism occupied a place of great prestige in the land. A further danger lay in its resemblance to the Canaanitish worship, towards which many were predisposed by long acquaintance. In fact, the worship of Tyre was probably Canaanitish agricultural worship, transformed under the cosmopolitan conditions of the seaport town. It was therefore more ornate, more lavish in its ritual, more sensual in its development, and on the whole more pretentious. Hence it was more subtly attractive to the Israelites, among whom it now carried on a missionary propaganda. To the untainted worshiper of the Yahweh of the early days, it was the essence of all that was false and abhorrent.

The champion of the ancient religion did not come

from the cities of Israel or Judah, nor even from the farms in the northern valleys. The desert alone was likely to produce an Elijah, clear-eyed, passionate, and uncompromising in his allegiance to Yahweh. Bred in the desert, he had not been contaminated with the soft ways of city culture. The simpler modes of the desert worship alone were known to him. Yahweh alone was his God. West of the Jordan, the Baal were to him in form and fact usurping the place of the nation's God. His anger blazed forth. He must many times have denounced the prevalent foreign worship. A famine fell on the land. Surely this was the sign of Yahweh's wrath. The story does not permit us to follow Elijah step by step, but he was indeed "a troubler of Israel." He condemned the growing cult in the royal court, and challenged Baalism for evidence of its worth. A splendid contest, the culmination of a long struggle, was staged on Mount Carmel. Elijah, the heroic figure, stood alone. But Yahweh was not only vindicated by famine, but also by fire and by rain. Ahab was convinced, and the first battle was won (I Kgs. xviii. 1-46).

His long sojourn on Horeb was preparatory to the second and more thoroughgoing effort to overthrow Baalism. Here he learned the lesson that what miracle cannot do the slow-working forces of human history may achieve. Yahweh was not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but was in the "sound of gentle stillness (I Kgs. xix. 12). Political intrigue can accomplish what cataclysms of nature cannot. So the prophet, using the methods of his day, set in motion those forces that ultimately overthrew the ruling dynasties in Damascus and Israel (I Kgs. xix. 15-17). These seemed so tainted with disloyalty to Yahweh, and so confirmed in their evil ways, that so long as they ruled there could be no true worship. The work Elijah thus conceived was carried out under the direc-



tion of Elisha, his successor and the leader of the prophetic bands, but a man much more kindly disposed towards civilization than was his stern master.

The spirit of Elijah was further shown in his attack on Ahab because of the appropriation of Naboth's vineyard (I Kgs. xxi. 1-27). In refusing to part with his vineyard, Naboth was influenced by an early religious idea that the family inheritance, having come from God, could not be alienated from the descendants. Such was the old Israelitish custom, but Tyre had a different set of customs. Jezebel gained, as would any Oriental monarch, by compulsion what Ahab, because of his consideration for the people and their prejudices, could not obtain. But Elijah was incensed that an ancient custom that preserved the rights of the common people should be trampled on in so outrageous a manner by those who had so deviated from the true worship. Such violations of ancient rights and privileges could surely end in no other way than the annihilation of the ruling house (I Kgs. xxi. 17-24).

*The Schools of the Prophets*—Elijah's relation to the schools of the prophets is not certain. These were small bands of patriotic-minded zealots. They were Yahweh worshipers, and stimulated the interest in national wars, and perhaps helped to inspire the fighters (I Kgs. xviii. 13; xxii. 6; II Kgs. ii. 7). The prophet usually appeared as a lone figure on the horizon, though we do on occasion find him in the midst of the official group. He was at least a kindred spirit with these as well as another group that had its origin about this time. The Rechabites, a sect about which we know very little, arose as a protest against the conditions of the day. They were unalterably opposed to the developing civilization. Their oath obliged them to drink no wine, build no houses, sow no seed, plant or own no vineyard, but to live perpetually in

tents (Jer. xxxv. 6-10). They were akin to the Nazarites (cf. Nu. vi. 1-4), and were the exponents of the simple, nomadic life. They believed that in this type of life Yahweh had revealed himself to the fathers, and that only in that type would he continue with his people. They were the conservatives, and failed to realize that a high type of religion might go with a well-developed civilization. Elijah had the same historical background as these, and in part expressed similar ideas.

The dramatic coloring of the Elijah stories makes it difficult sometimes to discern the historic thread. But through all there rises before us an ascetic figure from the desert, who challenged an enemy who had gained the protection of the court, a man who gave no quarter to the foe, but single-handed waged a warfare and set in motion those forces that ultimately purged the worship of Yahweh from the most insidious influences that ever beset it. By his attack on Baalism he helped to save the social and moral purity of his people. Stories any less ornate would have poorly served to preserve the true worth of this superbly imposing antagonist of an encroaching paganism.

Along side of Elijah is another character, Micaiah-ben-Imlah, who marks an epoch in Old Testament religion (I Kgs. xxii. 5-28). He also stood alone. Only once does he appear in our records, and then he is a messenger of woe. The four hundred sons of the prophets had assured Ahab and Jehoshaphat that Yahweh would deliver Ramoth-Gilead into their hands. Micaiah could see no such happy ending for leaders who were essentially disloyal to God. This is one of the early notes in that great chorus in which we hear, with varying intonation, that Yahweh is a God of character and is no respecter of persons.

## C—WRITING

The art of writing was perhaps more prevalent now than in any previous period in Israel's history. The internal evidence, as well as the general fact that the civilization of the nation was now a century old, would support this conclusion. Excavations also assure us of the fact. Here belongs the Moabite stone, with its important historical inscription, written in the characters of the old Phœnician alphabet. Potsherds belonging to the same time were found in Samaria by the Harvard University expedition, seventy-five of which have letters or words using the same script. These add proof chiefly to the fact that a conglomerate of races lived in Palestine, and to the lively intercourse commercially between one part of the country and another. The references to the "statutes of Omri" (Mic. vi. 16) and the law book of Jehoshaphat (II Chr. xvii. 7-9), as well as to Elijah's letter to Jehoram (II Chr. xxi. 12-15), are not sufficiently definite to determine what, if any, important literary activity they implied, but they do show that later generations looked back on these days as days of literary progress.

The evidence thus is cumulative that not only was there a wealth of oral tradition, stories, songs, customs, and national history, but that in this period there were the conditions that would foster literary activity. We may be reasonably certain that now the movement was on that preserved to posterity much of the early history of these people. As it was not completed before the next period, the consideration of it must be left to another chapter.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE DIVIDED KINGDOM

THE THIRD PERIOD, THE JEHU-JEROBOAM DYNASTY,  
842-740 B.C.

#### THE KINGS

	<i>Israel</i>		<i>Judah</i>	
Jehu	842	Ahaziah	843	
		Athaliah	842	
		Joash	836	
Jehoahaz	814			
Jehoash	797	Amaziah	796	
Jeroboam II	781	Azariah (Uzziah)	782	
Zechariah	740	Jotham (regent)	751	

II KINGS VIII. 16—XV. 12; II CHRONICLES XXI.—  
XXVIII.; AMOS; HOSEA.

#### A—HISTORICAL SKETCH

IN Israel we again face the forces of revolution. This time it is the outgrowth of religion, which in order to accomplish its purpose, allied itself with intrepid military daring. The prophetic party, that had been influenced by Elijah and his ideals, had been adding to the ferment and awaiting its opportunity through the reigns of Ahaziah and Jehoram. When in 844 B.C. Benhadad II of Syria fell ill, the hour for the first move had come. Elisha encouraged Hazael, a

Syrian army officer, to do away with his royal master, and take the throne (II Kgs. viii. 7-15). He, according to the narrative, was Elijah's nominee for the task of scourging Baalism out of Israel (I Kgs. xix. 15).

Two years later Jehoram of Israel, assisted by Ahaziah of Judah, taking advantage of the Assyrian campaigns against Syria, endeavored to reduce the old frontier fortress of Ramoth-Gilead (II Kgs. viii. 20-ix. 13). In the siege Jehoram was wounded and retired to the castle in Jezreel to regain his strength, and a short time later Ahaziah left the encampment to visit his wounded relative. To the waiting prophetic group this seemed the most favorable moment to carry out the full behest of Elijah. One of the prophets, at the direction of Elisha, hastened to the army camp, called Jehu aside, anointed him, and proclaimed him king over Israel. The army officers, when apprised of the action of the "mad man," enthusiastically symbolized their allegiance to the new king.

Jehu took hold with a firm hand. He drove to Jezreel, and with his own hand slew Jehoram, while some of his guard slew Ahaziah, king of Judah (II Kgs. ix. 14-28). Jezebel, the queen mother, defiant to the last, was slain in Jezreel (II Kgs. ix. 30-37). The seed of the house of Ahab was wiped out. Forty-two of the royal seed of Judah were next murdered, and a gathering of the prophets of Baal in their temple was treacherously put to the sword (II Kgs. x. 1-28). Thus did Jehu destroy Baal out of Israel. This revolution, inspired by Elijah and his band, was the bloodiest and most disastrous in the nation's history. With one stroke Israel cut herself off from her alliances with Tyre and Judah, which had been cultivated during the Omri-Ahab régime.

In Judah, Athaliah, the queen, showed her temper and her capacity (II Kgs. xi. 1-3). Anticipating an insurrection, she slew all the royal seed, seized the



supreme power, and ruled for six years, quite likely by the aid of the palace mercenaries. One young boy, Joash, of the ruling house, escaped the general slaughter through the alertness of his aunt, Jehosheba, the wife of the chief priest.

The prophets believed that by cleansing the worship from Baalism they would gain the favor of Yahweh, and thus insure the prosperity of the nation. History writes the commentary on their faith. Israel's international relationships were never more unfortunate than now. Immediately at the beginning of the reign of Jehu, 842 B.C., the Assyrian army, under Shalmaneser II, came west and attacked Hazael. But though Syria's allies had mostly forsaken her, and her country was ravaged by the enemy, yet the city of Damascus, into which the king was driven, could not be taken. The neighboring states, however, suffered severely. Tribute was paid to Assyria by Tyre and Sidon. "Jehu, the son of Omri," also sent his quota to the Assyrian king, "silver, gold, bowls of gold, chalices of gold, buckets of gold, bars of lead, a royal scepter, balsam wood," thereby expressing his allegiance to Shalmaneser. Thus the new dynasty brought the nation at once into Assyrian bondage.

After another unsuccessful attack on Damascus in 839 B.C., Assyria, owing to a vigorous but short-lived Armenian dynasty which challenged her power, was unable for thirty-six years either to send forces against Damascus or assistance to Jehu. During this period Syria recovered sufficiently to avenge herself on Jehu for his alliance with Assyria by harrying the land of Israel. East of the Jordan, the land of Gilead, Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh suffered from this raid (II Kgs. x. 32; cf. viii. 12, 13). A change of dynasty and even a change of ritual had been followed by only deeper disaster to the nation.

In 836 B.C. affairs in Judah came to a climax. The

priestly party under Jehoiada, the chief priest, brought the régime of Athaliah to a sudden end (II Kgs. xi. 4-20). Joash was now seven years of age. Athaliah, a woman, and a foreigner by her mother, could not have been entirely popular. The priestly party had gained influence with the guard so that they covenanted to protect the young king. On a Sabbath, when all was ready, the soldiers were manipulated so that all three divisions should be on duty, then the boy was anointed, crowned, and proclaimed king. Athaliah, who heard the tumult, came to the temple, and saw the cause of the rejoicing. She was thrust out and slain by the guard.

Jehu, after a violent and only partially successful reign, died in 814 B.C., and his son, Jehoahaz, inherited his throne and his adversaries, but not his energy. Israel suffered continuously at the hand of Hazael and that of his son, Benhadad III (II Kgs. xiii. 1-4). In 810 B.C. the forces of Hazael penetrated the country as far as Gath, and laid siege to Jerusalem. Joash, the good king of Judah, had to buy the invader off by spoiling the temple of all its treasure (II Kgs. xii. 17-xiii. 4). Both countries were in great straits because of the enemy. The only respite came when, in 803 and again in 797 B.C., the Assyrian having mastered her nearer foes, again attacked Syria, and engaged all her military resources. Then it was, in the form of the Assyrian, that "Yahweh gave Israel a Saviour so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians" (II Kgs. xiii. 5).

In Israel, Jehoahaz was succeeded by his son, Jehoash, in 797 B.C. Little is known of him as a man, but in his days the tide of fortune turned. For fifty years Syria had harried the outskirts of the country, and had even invaded the chief cities; now for fifty years Israel was the victor. A petty nation, the existence of which has only recently been discovered, the

kingdom of Hazark, in north Syria, seems to have made serious inroads on Syria at this time. This may have contributed to the three victories Jehoash gained over his enemy, when he wrested from them the border cities that had been taken from his father (II Kgs. xiii. 25).

Meanwhile revolution was at work in Judah. Joash, the child of the priestly party, was slain by conspirators, who were perhaps out of sympathy with the reform movements in religion (II Kgs. xii. 20). Amaziah, his son, was made king in his stead, and when his rule was established he slew his father's murderers. He made war on Edom, gained an important victory, and captured one of their important cities (II Kgs. xiv. 1-7). Then he insolently attacked Jehoash, either to throw off his vassalage, of which we have no other hint, or to subdue the north, of which there was not the remotest possibility (II Kgs. xiv. 7-14). He was defeated at Beth-Shemesh, taken prisoner from Lachish whither he had fled, two hundred yards of the Jerusalem wall were breached, the temple and the palace were plundered by the northern army, and Judah was made tributary to Israel. Amaziah's failure was the precursor of his assassination. He learned of a conspiracy in Jerusalem, and again fled to Lachish, where he was slain, and his son reigned in his stead (II Kgs. xiv. 17-21).

Brighter days, however, were on the horizon for both countries. Syria, weakened and wasted by Assyria and Hazark, was no longer a menace. The north held the south apparently in an easy bondage. Two able kings, Azariah (Uzziah) in Judah, 782 B.C., and Jeroboam II in the north, 781 B.C., were on the respective thrones. Peace within and freedom from without made possible the development of the resources as well as territorial expansion.

Our sources in Kings merely hint at this prosperity.

Azariah built Elath and restored it to Judah, and Jeroboam restored the old border of Israel (II Kgs. xiv. 22-27). It is quite possible that the chronicler, in his extended account of Uzziah's conquest of the Philistines and Arabians, as well as of the building operations, preserved a tradition that was founded on important fact (II Chr. xxvi. 6-15).

## B—INTERNAL CONDITIONS

*Economic*—Fortunately these were the days of the beginning of written prophecy, and from these sources we can, from this time on, easily reconstruct much of the picture. They fill in the outline the history suggests. It was the golden age of Israel. Shepherds and farmers had given place to the middlemen and the princes. Villages had grown to substantial cities, and the simple ways of peasant life had merged into the luxury as well as the license of the metropolis. Palaces had replaced mud huts, and marble and ivory, fine silk and rare wines, had become the conspicuous symbols of high life. Peace and prosperity filled the land as it had not since the time of Solomon, and Samaria and Jerusalem had become the rendezvous of the new rich. Of course, there was the other side. Penury, slavery, and suffering were the under-side of the picture. The poor were exploited. They suffered much from graft, and the upkeep of royalty was a heavy yoke upon them.

*Morals*—For the moral aspect of the national life we have to go chiefly to the great prophets of the eighth century, Amos, Hosea, Micah i-iii., and Isaiah i.-xi. The information here is complete in all details, and is a duplicate of that always found in similar economic and national situations. The rapid accumulation of wealth had been accompanied by graft, bribery, and dishonesty. Oppression, in every form

that the intellect could devise and commerce sustain, was grinding down the unfortunate poor. Luxury had become the handmaid of immorality, and women were the leaders in the debauchery. Regicide was but an indication of the lawlessness of the age. Religion was a cloak for the grossest conduct. The moral condition, particularly in the north, where the wealth was greatest, was loathsome to the high-minded peasant with nomadic blood in his veins.

*Religion*—Religiously the century opened with a revolution of one type; it ended with one of another type. For the formal worship of Yahweh, the revolution of Jehu in 842 B.C. was most auspicious. Intriguing Baalism, root and branch, was annihilated so far as that could be done by force. Jonadab-ben-Rechab, the patron of the nomadic ideal, riding with the king, was a sign of the times (II Kgs. x. 15-17). Loyalty to Yahweh, so far as formal allegiance was concerned, was achieved. Reform was also at work in the south. With the overthrow of Athaliah, the priests of the temple became the power behind the throne. The temple was repaired and beautified, the worship was perfected, and all the people covenanted to be loyal to Yahweh (II Kgs. xi. 4—xii. 6).

Hence, for a century the worship of Yahweh had occupied the attention of the religious leaders. A purified priesthood had given themselves with vigor to their tasks. Sacrifices had naturally increased, the niceties of ritual had been rounded out, altars in Israel and the temple in Jerusalem had gradually assumed new dignity, and the festivals commanded a patronage hitherto unknown. Formally the religion of Yahweh flourished. But with it all, Yahweh had not delivered his people from the foreign tyranny. Hence, many must have felt that, though the revolution had been introduced by the prophet, and it had accentuated the religious ritual, there was no adequate proof that



their God favored the movement. Some early theologian must surely have said Yahweh could not be pleased with such a massacre as Jehu ordered in the valley of Jezreel (cf. Hos. i. 4).

What, then, does Yahweh seek? That was now the serious question. Whence will the answer come? That democratic spirit of the desert, where all men shared alike, was shocked beyond measure at the broad chasm between the upper and the lower classes, the luxury on the one hand and the poverty on the other, as well as by the flagrant injustices, and the lack of human sympathy that was part of this new world of commerce. Outbursts against the abuse of privilege, and demands for the rights of the individual have been recorded earlier. But it is in the eighth century that the growing indignation finds definite and permanent expression. It is not strange that the first voice should be that of a peasant farmer. These were the people who often suffered most and profited least. As a countryman and a Judean, he saw clearly the trend of things in the north. As an individual unrelated to the prophetic schools, he had no prestige or position to lose. As a religious man, he believed that God must have indignation against those prevalent iniquities that stirred every right-thinking man to the depth of his nature. So Amos, towards the close of the reign of Jeroboam II (cir. 760 B.C.), could hold his peace no longer. At Bethel, at one of the great religious festivals, he denounced the prevalent injustices and railed at the religious conceptions of the day. God was righteous, and cared for righteousness more than he cared for ritual or for race (Amos v. 4—9, 21—27; ix. 7—8). To a nation so wholly abandoned to evil as was Israel nothing but destruction lay in the future (Amos i., ii., iii. 9—iv. 3; v. 1—3, 16—20; vii. 14—17).

Hosea, a northerner, a few years later delivered a

similar message, adding out of his own experience a note of very great tenderness. As he loved his erring wife, surely God, who was kinder than man, loved wayward Israel (Hos. i. iii.). Both prophets agreed in attacking the reigning house as vigorously as their predecessors of a century earlier had denounced the house of Omri. But the point of attack was far different. There it was ritual chiefly, here it is ethics chiefly. These two prophets opened an epoch in religion by their emphasis on the true place of morality with an intensity hitherto unknown.

*Moral Consciousness Developing*—We have a glimpse into a movement parallel with the prophets, and no doubt influenced by the same spirit that prompted them. When Amaziah of Judah came to the throne we are told that he slew his servants, who had slain the king, his father. Then follows the arresting sentence, which shows the development of the moral consciousness of the nation. "But the children of the murderers he put not to death" (II Kgs. xiv. 5-6). This is a far advance from early practice (cf. Josh. vii. 24-26; II Sam. xxi.; II Kgs. ix. 26). It is, as our editor assures us, in accord with the law of Deuteronomy (II Kgs. xiv. 6; cf. Dt. xxiv. 16). The law, no doubt, grew out of precedent, and precedent was founded in the conscience of the age. This is one of the straws that shows the trend of national thought.

*Primitive Ideas*—With all these indications of progress we need not be surprised that many still retained in their thinking some of the imperfect ideals of the past. The limitation of Yahweh to the soil of Palestine is one of these conceptions. Elijah agreed with Naaman when he wished two cart loads of Palestinian soil, so that he might worship Yahweh thereon in Damascus (II Kgs. v. 15). This is the remnant of an old idea that a deity belonged to a certain land,

and only there was he at home. Early Semites had gods of the hills and gods of the valleys (I Kgs. xx. 23), as well as gods who were supposed to control the forces of nature and rule over the various tribes (II Kgs. iii. 27; cf. Moabite stone).

### C—LITERATURE

When we try to estimate the literature of this period we find that these were growing days both in the north and the south. The civilization, though marked by many retrogressive movements, was now two hundred years, or six generations, out from nomadic life. The scribe had long been in the land. Though education was voluntary, there must have been those in a few great centers, at least, who had learned the art of writing. The need for writing had now been existent for over a century. The pottery of Samaria and the Moabite stone were inscribed towards the end of the previous dynasty. Inscribed monuments, the Siloam inscription in Hebrew, and the Zinjirli inscriptions in Aramaic, that come from north Syria, and date from the following period, have come to light during the last century. Though all these inscriptions are simple and are scarcely worthy of the name of literature, they indicate that the peoples who wrote them were at least technically prepared to be the founders of literature.

Two national song books, the book of Jashar, *i.e.*, the upright one, which is Israel, and the book of the wars of Yahweh, were collected now, if not earlier. From the book of Jashar we have at least two songs, *viz.*, Joshua x. 12-13 and II Samuel i. 19-27. It might well be that such songs as Judges v. and II Samuel iii. 33, 34 were included in this early collection. Only one fragment, a part of a geographical poem, Numbers xxi. 14-15, is credited to the book of the wars of Yahweh.

Numbers xxi. 27-30, which perhaps celebrated Omri's victory over Moab, and is often ascribed to this book, was almost certainly taken by E. from oral tradition. It is not improbable, however, that a song such as Exodus xv. 1-18, which is a war song celebrating ancient victories at the Red sea, in Moab, Edom, and Canaan, was included in what must have been a popular book in those days of constant conflict.

Of still greater importance is what is generally called the J. document. It is sufficiently definite to place the writing of J. about 850 B.C., that is, approximately the time of Elijah. The analysis of J. is given in any modern commentary or introduction to the Old Testament, and is too lengthy to be subscribed here. It has gathered up material that has come from many ages and from many minds, and runs back to the earliest life of the national ancestors. It is now found throughout the Hexateuch, and includes the following five different types of literature.

1. A few ancient songs, chiefly of a secular nature, as Genesis iv. 23, Lamech gloating over his brutality; Genesis ix. 25, a curse, indicating the national hatred against Canaan; Genesis xxv. 23, which celebrates the age-long relation between Jacob and Edom. These are the very natural expressions of individual and national feeling, and with this as a background, we are the better able to appreciate the heights of moral grandeur to which the leaders of these people rose in later days.

2. Traditions concerning the beginnings of human life and progress were preserved and interpreted. A few illustrations taken from the early chapters of Genesis will be illuminating. Genesis ii. 4b-iii. 24 tells the story of the origin of man and of sin; iv. 1-25 concludes the story of the beginnings of agricultural and industrial life with the boast of a murderer; following this development in civilization we find the

earth so corrupt that Yahweh in his wrath sends the flood, vi. 5-8; vii. 1-5, 7-10, 12; viii. 2, 3a, 6-12, 20-22; then comes the story of the cultivation of the vine and sin, ix. 18-27; and this is followed by the Babel builders and their punishment because of sin. The relation throughout these stories between civilization and sin seems to be too close to deny that the writer thought the one was the cause of the other. Surely he was a kindred spirit to Elijah, his well-known contemporary.

3. The stories of the patriarchs, with their intimate human touches, belong chiefly to J. The narrative of the early life of Abraham, save a few short passages, comes from this source (Gen. xii.-xvi.; xviii. 1-xix. 38), as does also the bulk of his later life. J. also gives a good picture of Jacob and Joseph. Much of tribal history, often the most stirring episodes and telling characterizations, are preserved in these tales of the early ancestors. We have little in Scripture that is more revealing of ancient life and ideals than these wonderful narratives.

4. Early national history is also of great interest to this writer. A continuous story is found through Exodus i.-xxiv. and Numbers x. 29-xxv. 5, carrying the history of the national movements from the experiences in Egypt to the settlement in Canaan. This is replete with graphic phrases, inherited from many camp fires, and reproduces early conditions and atmosphere in a very remarkable way.

5. Many ancient customs, that to-day help us to reconstruct a lifelike picture of the old situations, lie imbedded in the story, and in the early law codes that have been incorporated in the history. Exodus xxxiv. 10-26, as an ancient code of laws, deserves attention. The context suggests it had been written before the time of J. (cf. Ex. xxxiv. 27). It also is what it claims to be, a decalogue, and is in the terms of a covenant



(Ex. xxxiv. 28). Its whole tone is ritualistic, and is in strong contrast to Exodus xx. 1-16. The regulations of at least seven of the ten words are for agricultural life, while the point at issue in two or three of them (cf. Ex. xxxiv. 25, 26) is so primitive that they are not easily intelligible to the modern reader. The origin and history of this code, like that of all codes, would be hard to trace, but it seems probable that a number of these regulations represent the reactions of priests and judges in Israel against certain of the licentious rites and customs of their Canaanitish neighbors (*e.g.*, Ex. xxxiv. 26b). Others represent old Hebrew customs, while still others may have been adapted to Yahweh worship from certain Canaanitish practices. Thus is it that law always develops, and it is the result of such struggles as this between various elements that assures us that this little nation was the elect of God for a great mission.

All the J. document was woven together in a continuous story of the life and doings of the ancestors. The religious life of the people, their worship of Yahweh, and their observance of a few rites from time immemorial are assumed. The fine moral tone of the author not only determined the selection of the material, but also permeated the moral judgments throughout. Few exercises are more illuminating than, following the critical analysis of the Hexateuch, to read the separated J. document from beginning to end. This gives unity and coherence to what otherwise must sometimes seem a veritable scrap-heap of verses. The new unit presents a literary quality that is unexcelled, and the moral and religious values are surpassed by no contemporary writing. Vividly and beautifully the ancient characters and national events are made to stand out in the written page. Human in their failures, part of the life of their generation, leaders in laying foundations and in directing great move-

ments, these men and their experiences are ably used to teach the lessons of the noblest thought of the ninth century B.C.

During the same period men in the north were likewise busy. The Elijah stories, I Kings xvii., xix., xxi.; II Kings i. 2-17, and the Elisha stories, II Kings ii., iv. 1-vi. 23; viii. 1-15; xiii. 14-21, that had now been oral property for half a century were committed to writing. From another northern source we are indebted to those prophetic narratives that have a strongly political flavor, found in I Kings xx., xxii.; II Kings iii. 4-27; vi. 24-vii. 20; ix., x.

A little later, but still before 750 B.C., there was produced what has come to be known as the E. document. It is the counterpart of J., only somewhat smaller. It begins with Abraham, and follows especially the history of Israel. The literary gift of the writer is not equal to that of J., but, as we might expect, in the later document the ethical and religious ideas show development. Anthropomorphisms are carefully avoided, and the religion of Yahweh is first introduced in the wilderness (Ex. iii. 9-14). Hence the early worship of the ancestors was idolatrous, and the leaders, Abraham, Moses, and Joshua, have more of an official cast than in J. The ritual side of religion is of importance to the author, and Bethel is a sanctuary of great historical significance (Gen. xxviii. 11-12, 17, 18, 22; xxxv. 1-18, 16-20).

A code of laws, the Covenant Code, is also incorporated (Ex. xx. 23-xxiii. 19; cf. Ex. xxiv. 7). In it there are two definite divisions. The first is a civil code, consisting of a number of judgments, which are based on hypothetical cases (xxi. 1-xxii. 17). These are not commands, but are the results of decisions. They are for a primitive agricultural society. Even then, they meet the needs of such society in a very inadequate way. Slavery and concubinage were the

practice. The slave and the woman were private property, and their value was small. These judgments have many points of contact with the code of Hammurabi of 2100 B.C. So far as completeness is concerned, the honor unquestionably goes to the Babylonian law. So far as moral tone is concerned, primitive though it is, the Covenant Code has in it more of promise. It recognizes that certain rights belong to all individuals.

The second division of Covenant Code is a collection of commands, a ceremonial code (Ex. xx. 24-26; xxii. 18-xxiii. 19). This parallels the ritual decalogue of J. so closely that we must think of each as going back to a common ceremonial practice in the days before the division of the kingdom.

To the same days we may attribute the writing of the original stories of the judges now found in Judges iii. 6-xvi. 31, and most of Judges xvii.-xxi. To this also must be added the original records of those historical events that the court historians of the north and the south, respectively, thought worth while to preserve. To these we are indebted for much of the historical knowledge that later writers incorporated in their religious writings.

These unknown writers paved the way for the earliest of the writing prophets. Amos, of Tekoa, preached at Bethel about 760 B.C., and shortly after must have written the book that now bears his name. The orderly arrangement of the material, which is exemplary, does not dull the passion of the preacher. The book naturally falls into three divisions:

- (1) i.-ii. Curses on the nations, Israel included.
- (2) iii.-vi. Sermons; condemnation of social evils.
- (3) vii.-ix. 8a. Visions; complete destruction.

To this were added an appendix and a few brief passages that do not correspond to the tone that is uniformly found in the above sections of the book.

Chapter ix. 8b-15, the unconditional, hence (if preached in 760 B.C.) unethical, promise of a glorious future for both nations; iv. 13; v. 8-9; ix. 5-6, three delightful, but antiquarian poems, and ii. 4-5, condemnation of Judah because of spiritual sins, are passages that because of their linguistic peculiarities, their lack of connection with the context, and their difference of outlook from the rest of the book are very generally regarded as interpolations in the original text of Amos. We already have seen how naturally and how easily interpolations and interpretations could creep into the Scriptures during centuries of scribal activity. Hence for the study of the teaching of the prophet it may be better to omit these, owing to the uncertainty. The value of their messages, however, is not thereby lessened. In another age under other conditions, they must have profoundly stirred and encouraged the hearts of the wavering and the faithful. Their contribution to life and thought will be taken up in what seems a more appropriate background.

The central note of Amos is that God is righteous. Hence He was supremely interested in ethics, in the social, commercial, and political doings of the nation. In fact He was more interested in this right relation between men in the common affairs of life than He was in any nation, even in Israel herself, or in any form of worship, no matter how carefully observed. This that sounds to us like a commonplace, was revolutionary in the days of the prophet. Mercilessly this fiery spirit from the south attacked the prevalent sins, as dishonesty in business, bribery in the courts of justice, wild revelry in the ladies quarters, brutality on the battlefield, immorality at their festivals, trafficking in human life, and violation of covenants. Moving among them at one of their great festivals, when they were dreaming that Yahweh must be looking on them with great favor, he rudely scored their

religious practices, and declared that the lavish ritual that was practiced at Bethel was without divine sanction (Amos v. 21-26). He declared it to be the word of Yahweh, that a nation so morally corrupt had no hope. The day of repentance had passed, and before it there was nought but men slain by the swords, cities burned and breached, and the women and children carried into servitude and captivity by Assyria (Amos v. 27; vi. 14; vii. 9; ii. 14-16). He was like a scorching wind from the bare heights, heralding destruction in his wake. It is no wonder that they drove him from the country as one whom the authorities could not tolerate. But his message is one of the ringing voices that has lived on through the centuries, and the heart of man acknowledges in it the voice of the divine.

Hosea, a northerner by birth, deeply loving his own people, appeared on the scenes about ten years later. From the tragic experience of an unfaithful wife, who had gone off with her lover, he learned a profound, spiritual truth. He still loved his erring wife; surely then, Yahweh is as merciful as man at his best, and still loves wayward Israel. The simplest analysis of the book, which is not nearly so orderly as Amos, is:

(1)—i.-iii. The home wrecked because of the unfaithful wife.

(2)—iv.-x. The nation wrecked because of unfaithful leaders.

(3)—xi.-xiv. The redemptive love of God as father and husband.

Passages that many have suspected of being later than Hosea because of historical and theological features are Hosea i. 7; 10-11; iii. 5; iv. 15a; viii. 14; x. 12; xi. 10, 11; xiv. 9.

Hosea is as strenuous as Amos in demanding right conduct as basal to religion. Sacrifice and burned offering are not the important divine requirements (Hos. iv. 2; vi. 6). But he declares that God loves



his people as a husband or as a father, in spite of their disloyalty. Thus the dominant note is one of great tenderness. Personal experience pervades the pages of the book and the tender mercy and long suffering of Yahweh have rarely, if ever, been more effectively expressed (cf. Hos. xi. 1-4; xiv. 4-8). But Hosea was a pioneer in three other directions. He condemned the revolution of Jehu, which a hundred years earlier was at least stimulated by the prophets (Hos. i. 4). He asserted that Yahweh was the God of the agricultural processes, that had by many of the earlier leaders been believed to be the domain of the Canaanitish Baal (Hos. ii. 8, 16). He attacked the hillside worship, that earlier, so far as we know, had always been considered legitimate, because of the flagrant licentiousness and idolatry that was frequently associated with it. These contributions to religious thought and life were of the most permanent value. They help us to see how far men such as these, led by the divine spirit, traveled in a century; how the days of darkness were fast passing; and how days of light and truth were being ushered in. In so far as we are able to follow the processes whereby this progress was attained, we are following the working of the spirit of God. The religious writings of the one hundred years of this dynasty are of that quality that they would make any age illustrious.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LAST DAYS OF ISRAEL 740-722 B.C.

#### KINGS

Zechariah	740
Shallum	740
Menahem	738
Pekahiah	736
Pekah	734
Hoshea	732-722

#### II KINGS xv. 8-31; xvii. 1-41; ISAIAH vii. 1-9

At the very outset we have a chronological problem. The four kings, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea are reported to have reigned over a period of forty-one years. Menahem, however, paid tribute to Assyria in 738 B.C. and Hoshea ceased reigning with the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C., both of which dates are fixed by the Assyrian lists and astronomical calculation. Any rearrangement of dates is of course somewhat arbitrary, even though it is necessary. The length of reign of the individual kings suggested here seems to be the most likely.

*Assyrian Campaigns*—Five years before the death of Jeroboam II, Tiglath-Pileser III, the Pul of II Kings xv. 19, etc., a military genius and a statesman, had seized the Assyrian throne. His early years were spent in quelling rebellions in the east and in bringing the Arameans, who had been pouring into Babylon, into

subjection. Then for two years he engaged in successful warfare against Aramean powers in the north at Kummuh and in the west at Arpad. In 740 B.C. the way to Syria lay open to him. Nothing but the most careful husbanding of resources, and the most statesmanlike leadership throughout all Syria, Palestine included, could stay this enemy. But for eighteen years, Israel engaged in petty intrigue and sectional jealousies, all of which, with inane leadership, resulted in a pitiable, national débâcle (Hos. vii. 4-7).

Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam II, was slain after a reign of six months (II Kgs. xiv. 29). Shallum, his murderer, was in turn disposed of at the end of a month by Menahem (II Kgs. xv. 8-32). During the early part of Menahem's reign, he ruthlessly butchered the inhabitants of those villages that had opposed his assumptions.

In 738 B.C. Tiglath-Pileser III invaded the country and exacted an enormous tribute, about \$2,000,000, or the equivalent in present-day values of something like \$30,000,000, as the price for the recognition of his claim to the throne (II Kgs. xv. 19-20). Menahem raised this by a direct tax of about \$35 apiece on all the mighty men of wealth. This would require about 60,000 men who were deemed able to make such a contribution, and gives us a fair estimate of the prosperity of the country at the close of the reign of Jeroboam II.

Menahem, the most brutal king since the time of Jehu, died a natural death, but his son Pekahiah, inherited the whirlwind. Insurrection was abroad because of the pro-Assyrian policy of his father. Pekah, a Gileadite, a captain in the army, led the rebellion, slew him, and seized the throne. Then, with Rezin of Syria, he endeavored to unite all the country, Syria, Israel, and Judah, in order to withstand the power of Assyria. Judah, under Ahaz, not only held out against

this proposal, but even formed an alliance with Tiglath-Pileser III in 734 B.C., with the object of gaining his assistance (cf. Isa. vii. 1-9). The same year the Assyrian army came west, took Gaza, and laid siege to Damascus, which fell in 732 B.C., after a prolonged defense. Northern Israel was at the same time attacked, and four important cities in Naphthali were taken. Gilead and Galilee were subjugated, and in accordance with a new colonization policy, first devised in 740 B.C. to punish the intractable Syrian state of Unqui, a part of the population was deported (II Kgs. xv. 29). An important Aramaic inscription belonging to these days celebrates this policy in these words: "The daughters of the sunrise he carried to the sunset, and the daughters of the sunset he carried to the sunrise" (Zenjirli).

Hoshea, a pro-Assyrian, in 732 B.C. disposed of Pekah in the way most approved by that age of anarchy, and Samaria was saved the humiliation of defeat at the hands of the Assyrian (II Kgs. xvii. 1-6). It is possible that tribute was paid by the new king to Tiglath-Pileser III as a token of his allegiance. When in 727 B.C. a new king, Shalmaneser IV, ascended the Assyrian throne, Hoshea withheld tribute and formed an alliance with So, an unidentified king of Egypt, or perhaps Mutzri. Such secession was always swiftly punished, when possible. In 724 B.C. the Assyrian army was at the gates of Samaria, and towards the end of 722 B.C., shortly after Sargon II had succeeded Shalmaneser IV as king, the city opened its gates to the conqueror. According to Assyrian records, 27,290 of the nobles were deported to three quite widely separated Assyrian provinces, and here they were assimilated by the people and lost to national history.

*The Ten Tribes*—But Samaria was not depopulated. Only a very small percentage of the people was ever removed from the land. The ten tribes had passed through many disasters, and many disturbances dur-

ing almost three hundred years of empire. They had been defeated and disabled time after time. Every decade the cross-country traffic had scattered its seeds by the wayside, and added its mixture of foreign custom and foreign blood. The winds from the eastern desert, and the streams from the Lebanons had contributed their quota of strange life and thought. Phœnicia and the sea had added to the variegated complexion of costume and custom of Galilee and Samaria. Many foreign elements, Canaanite, Syrian, Arabian, and Phœnician, had already been assimilated. This conquest added only one more disaster, and that was of chief moment because of the close of the kingdom. Twenty-seven thousand deported and a group of Arameans from Babylon imported to fill their places in 721 B.C., did not make a very radical change in the population (II Kgs. xvii. 24).

*The Samaritans*—The new colonists for a time suffered from the depredations of wild animals, it was thought, because they were unfamiliar with the religious charms that were necessary to win the favor of the god of the land. They were therefore provided with a Yahwist priest, and were initiated in the proper religious rites. These people easily assimilated with the Israelitish stock as they came from a branch of the same family.

An Assyrian governor was placed over the land, and the independent kingdom of the ten tribes was at an end. Its history had been one long struggle with varying successes. The product of many tribal affiliations, and the victim of a geographical situation, it failed to survive in the unequal combat. Some of those who remained joined their fortunes to those of Judah, the sister kingdom, where the religious conditions must have made an appeal. Many remained in their old homes, continuing in their old ways, gradually mixing with the colonists, as their ancestors before



them had done with Canaanites and others, and ultimately out of these grew the Samaritans, of whom a small body of about one hundred and fifty still remain.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH 735-686 B.C.

#### KINGS

AHAZ	735
HEZEKIAH	715-686

II Kings xviii. 1—xx. 21; II Chronicles xxviii.—xxxi.;  
Isaiah i.—xi. 9; xx., xxxvi.—xlix.; Micah i.—iii.; v. 1,  
10-13; vi. 9-16; vii. 1-6.

#### A—HISTORICAL SKETCH

UZZIAH, the contemporary and subject of Jeroboam II, lived peaceably with his master, developed his resources, strengthened his defenses, and enlarged his borders. During his declining years, owing to leprosy, he shared his power with Jotham, his son, as regent. With the death of Jeroboam II and the ensuing feuds in the northern kingdom, Judah naturally without a struggle became independent (II Kgs. xv. 32-38). Jotham's reign, which closed in 735 B.C., was but the continuation of his father's. The only specific act referred to in Kings is that he built the upper gate of the house of Yahweh.

Ahaz, his son, a young man of twenty, succeeded to the throne (II Kgs. xvi. 1-20; Isa. vii. 1—ix. 7). In the beginning of his reign, Rezin of Syria, and Pekah of Israel, sought to form with him a triple alliance against the almost certain invasion of Tiglath-Pileser

III. Ahaz refused, and was attacked by the northern coalition. Rezin took Elath, Judah's port on the Gulf of Akabah, and the allies set siege to Jerusalem. Ahaz, most probably at this time, for it was the most serious crisis of his reign, followed the ancient pagan custom, and sacrificed his son in order to win the favor of deity (II Kgs. xvi. 3). Isaiah endeavored to persuade him to keep quiet, seek no material aid, only trust in Yahweh. But the king, with a shortsighted policy, rejected the overtures of the prophet, sent an embassy to Assyria with substantial gifts, pledged allegiance, and sought assistance against his enemies. The Assyrian forces reached Samaria in 734 B.C., and inside of two years the fortress was reduced.

An impressive reception was staged in Damascus by the conquerors, which the tributary powers, Ahaz included, were commanded to attend. The young king was much impressed by the type of altar, Assyrian most likely, before which the ceremonies took place. As a vassal prince, he ordered the priests to make a duplicate, which was placed in front of the temple. Other changes were made in the temple furniture and ritual, presumably to be in keeping with the new altar and with Assyrian worship.

The death of Tiglath-Pileser III in 727 B.C., however, was the signal for a general revolt in the west, which was quickly quelled by Shalmaneser IV. Judah, perhaps influenced by Isaiah, remained loyal to her allegiance. Samaria fell in 722 B.C., and twice in the next decade Assyrian soldiers appeared on the frontiers of Judah. In 720 B.C. rebellion in the north led by the king of Hamath, supported by Arpad, Damascus, Samaria, Gaza, and the Arabian Mutzri, was suppressed, and the Assyrian army marched as far south as Raphia, where they met and defeated an Egyptian army under Shabako. Again, in 711 B.C., a well-organized revolt led by Ashdod was put down by Sargon II.

Judah, adhering to the peace policy of Isaiah, seems not to have been party to the rebellion on either occasion. She paid her tribute, and was not molested.

With the death of Ahaz, Hezekiah, his son, came to the throne (II Kgs. xviii. 1—xx. 14). The accession year is uncertain. Our records in one place tell us that Samaria fell in the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah, which would place the new ruler on the throne in 728 B.C. (II Kgs. xviii. 10). A few verses later we have the information that the campaign of Sennacherib, which was in 701 B.C., was in the fourteenth year of his reign, which would make the opening of his reign date from 715 B.C. This is the date we are using, though of course it is arbitrary.

On the death of Sargon II and the succession of Sennacherib to the Assyrian throne, in 705 B.C., Judah threw in her lot with the rebels. She had grown strong in the last decade. Hezekiah had widened her borders towards the west, and had taken Gaza and her suburbs from the Philistines (II Kgs. xviii. 8). The anti-Assyrian coalition was now stronger than ever. Mero-dach-baladan, an old time usurper, whom it had taken Sargon II twelve years to drive out of Babylon into exile, immediately on the death of Sargon II had seized the Babylonian throne from the Assyrian lieutenant. His intrigues had never ceased during his exile of five years. Now many of the small Babylonian states rallied to his banner. He had won his way into the good graces of Hezekiah, and in the west all looked favorable for independence.

The Philistines were eager for revolt. Tyre, now of considerable military importance, joined them. Egypt, ever willing to make trouble for her old time enemy, promised assistance, and gained a following at the court of Hezekiah (Isa. xx. 1-6; xxx. 1-5; xxxi. 1-3). Moab, Edom, Ammon, and the Arabian tribes, ever ready to escape tribute, threw their lot in

with the alliance Hezekiah, the most resolute of the leaders and commanding considerable wealth, thought the time to strike for national liberty was ripe. Padi, the Assyrian appointee to the throne of Ekron, was taken by the princes of the city, and Hezekiah imprisoned him in the city of Jerusalem. He encouraged the Egyptian alliance, strengthened the defenses of Jerusalem, brought the water supply within the walls by the Siloam tunnel, and prepared to meet the enemy.

Sennacherib's movements were decisive. Within nine months he had driven Merodach-baladan out of Babylon, spoiled the great city, and had taken over 200,000 captives. Two years later he reached the Mediterranean coast, captured and placed under tribute all the important Phœnician cities save Tyre, and then marched down the Philistine plain. Moab and Edom hastily submitted, Askelon was overthrown, and many were deported, and Ekron was besieged. Then the Egyptian army on which all had been relying, came out to give battle. Sennacherib met it at Eltekeh, in the south of Palestine, and defeated it. Ekron was reduced, and then he swept the Judean hillsides, capturing by his own account forty-six walled cities, innumerable smaller ones, immense spoil, and 200,150 people. Whether all these were deported or not we cannot say, as in the cylinder on which Sennacherib enumerates the treasure Hezekiah sent to Nineveh, he only mentions, "a heavy treasure together with his daughters and the women of his palace, and male and female musicians." But the submission of Hezekiah was complete. He gave tribute of great value, spoiling the treasury of the temple, and even stripping the gold off the doors and pillars of the sanctuary (II Kgs. xviii. 13-16). The Assyrian records tell us that he had to give up Padi, who was again placed on the throne of Ekron, and that Sennacherib had "shut up Hezekiah in Jerusalem like a bird in a cage."



It is not easy to arrange the details of the story of Sennacherib's attack on Judah as preserved in II Kings xviii. 13—xix. 37 or Isaiah xxxvi.—xxxix. Nor does the existence of a laudatory account from an Assyrian eye-witness make it any easier. We seem to have in the book of Kings three different sources that have led to different interpretations.

II Kings xviii. 13–16 is in the editor's phraseology, and had its source in the court annals. It agrees essentially with the Assyrian records. The Assyrian monuments name the tribute as thirty talents of gold, and eight hundred talents of silver, etc., while our records mention thirty talents of gold and three hundred talents of silver, etc. In the face of these two witnesses, we may accept this as the general résumé of the results of the invasion.

II Kings xviii. 17—xix. 8 is a vivid picture of a rather dramatic scene in front of Jerusalem. Officers of the Assyrian army had been sent by the king from Lachish with a considerable force to treat with Hezekiah concerning the capitulation of the city. These officers took up their position at "the conduit of the upper pool," under the city walls. Hezekiah sent a commission of three of his important men to receive their overtures. The chief spokesman for the enemy very fluently and piously argued the advisability of surrender. A delightful passage at arms took place between this officer and Eliakim as to what language should be used for their diplomatic conference. The Assyrian insisted on using the Hebrew vernacular so that all might understand. The demand was for capitulation. In great distress the commission returned to the waiting monarch and gave the report. Isaiah was called in, and his council of refusal was adopted. The Rabshakeh—an Assyrian official title—and his companions then returned to the main army.

The third source is II Kings xix. 9–35. This relates

that when Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was approaching, he sent a letter to Hezekiah by royal post, demanding surrender. Hezekiah took the letter to the temple, and in a very calm mood uttered a very dignified prayer. Isaiah sent a message to the king, telling him in eight lengthy, argumentative verses, the word of Yahweh concerning Babylon, and then in five concluding verses gave a sign for the assurance of the king.

Are the second and the third narratives partial details of two campaigns of Sennacherib against Judah, the one in 701 B.C., and the other in 689 B.C.? We know that Tirhakah was not on the throne of Egypt until 691 B.C., also that Sennacherib sent an army against the Arabians in 689 B.C., which perhaps reached as far west as Egypt. Was he compelled to go back to Babylon in 701 B.C. because of an insurrection which that old mischief maker, Merodach-baladan, had started? Might this be "the tidings" to which Isaiah referred (cf. II Kgs. ix. 7)? Did his army in 689 B.C. suffer from bubonic plague, which so often broke out in ancient armies, so that he could not continue his campaign, and did not care to chronicle all the facts?

Or are these only different versions of the overtures made to Hezekiah in 701 B.C.? The facts of which we can feel sure in the light of all the evidence are, the humiliation, if not the capture, of Jerusalem, the payment of a large tribute, and the hurried withdrawal of the army of the conqueror because of impending danger.

## B—INTERNAL CONDITIONS

Hezekiah ruled thirteen years longer, and so far as we know, they were years of peace, hence prosperity and national growth. During his reign Judah attained considerable wealth, and with that came the corre-

sponding social and religious tendencies. The temple was again a splendid treasure house, as was also the palace of the king. The Siloam tunnel, bored through the solid rock a distance of over seventeen hundred feet in order to bring the water from the virgin's spring within the city wall, hints at the resources of the kingdom. The brief inscription found in this tunnel in 1880 is of paleographic interest only.

But the conditions now were not such that strong men ruling petty kingdoms could figure advantageously in international affairs. Assyria ruled, and that with a strong hand, compelling large tribute, crushing revolt swiftly, and suffering none to rival her. Hence Judah was but a petty kingdom, subordinated to the interests of a greater nation.

Morally it is the same old story. Wealth and foreign associations induced a riotousness and immorality that called down the ire of the prophets. Ahaz followed foreign gods and introduced many foreign practices. The princes devoured the people of the land. Those in high places trampled the poor under their heel. The wealthy joined land to land, and monopolized the village commons. Judges sold their decisions to the highest bidder. The priests were mercenary. Lust, drunkenness, and debauchery defiled the whole land, and idolatry, with all its corrupting influences, was in every center. Such were the conditions that are described most vividly by the prophets, and such were the people to whom they ministered.

The religious conditions also had much of evil in them. Ahaz sold himself deliberately to the Assyrian for a material reward. Hence it was quite natural that he should introduce Assyrian worship in all its glory. These were the days in which the Assyrian altar was introduced into the temple, the worship of the sun was established, and horses and chariots were dedicated to the sun (II. Kgs. xvi. 18; xxiii. 12). Not only

did this new worship tend to displace the worship of Yahweh, but old pagan practices, such as child sacrifices, were renewed.

When Hezekiah came to the throne there was a change. The convictions of Isaiah, perhaps a kinsman and tutor, guided the young king, who was more truly religious than his father. He followed the prophet's policy of nonalliance with the revolting nations in 711 B.C. After the humiliation of 701 B.C. the prophet's influence must have been greater than ever. The words of Micah must also have contributed to a real searching of heart, if not to repentance (Mic. iii. 12; cf. Jer. xxvi. 18-19). How far reforms went in the beginning of the reign we cannot say. But sometime during his rule the temple was cleansed more thoroughly than during that of any predecessor. The brazen serpent, which claimed great antiquity and was probably related to the widespread serpent worship, was removed (II Kgs. xviii. 4). The ancient high places throughout the country were desecrated, and the sacred symbols, the pillar and the ashera, were cut down (II Kgs. xviii. 4). Thus the temple was cleansed, the worship was made more spiritual, and it became for the first time in history the only accredited place of worship. Religious forms could thus be controlled as never before, and old social sins that had from Canaanitish times been associated with the local worship would henceforth lose much of their religious sanction.

### C—LITERATURE

The redeeming feature of the period is its literature. This, with the spiritual insight of the prophets, is the justification for calling it the golden age of Judah. Isaiah was the dominating figure, and Micah was a fearless contemporary. But there were other writers

who did great service, whose names were not perpetuated with the records.

There may have been much religious poetry that expressed the fears, hopes, and ideals of the generation. Some of our Psalms, *e.g.*, iii., xx., xxi., xxviii. and others as well, may easily be interpreted in the light of the experience of 701 B.C., but confidently to assert that therefore they were necessarily written at that time would be going beyond the evidence. To say that there were none written in these days would be still more unwarranted.

A similar question is raised by the Book of Proverbs. Proverbs xxv. 1 states: "These also are the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out." This preserves the tradition of literary activity in this reign. It is the introduction to Proverbs xxv.-xxix. There is every reason to accept both the existence of proverbs and of editorial and literary activity in Judah at this time.

Collections of proverbs, that is, terse epigrammatic sentences that express a generally accepted truth, are found among most peoples, ancient and modern. The Old Testament writers were conscious that all nations had their "wise men" (cf. Jer. xlix. 7; Ob. 8; Ezk. xxviii. 3; Isa. xix. 11). People of very primitive culture may, and often do, coin these happy phrases of homely philosophy. Samson was credited with more than one such, but

If with my heifer thou did'st not plow  
Thou would'st not have read my riddle now.

was his best (Jgs. xiv. 18). Solomon gained a great reputation for discriminating judgment and witty retort. No doubt the reputation was merited.

Like all literature, proverbs, though they deal with human life, its foibles and fancies, its conclusions and



ideals, and not with the march of events, always afford some indication of the strata from which they have come. Like the pebbles on the seashore, though rounded off and small, they bear unmistakable marks of the area out of which they have come.

Many of the proverbs in chapters xxv.-xxix. are quite appropriate for the early days of Israel. They, in fact, seem to be the earliest collection we have. It may well be that a collection was made in the days of Hezekiah. As we read this section, we observe that only an occasional proverb has any bearing on nomadic life. The earliest days of Israel may have produced many pithy phrases, but few of them have survived. A few of these have an agricultural background, but it is rather curious that a greater number of such have not been preserved. Commercial and city life hold the place of prominence. Kings and judges, gossiping neighbors and wily temptresses, the sluggard and the wicked are paraded throughout.

The moral tone is striking. Monogamy is taken for granted. The verdict of the great prophets in the field of ethics is assumed. They are nonritualistic. The stress placed on the evil effects of the tongue, and the call to avoid the temptress suggest evils that are pronounced in well-developed society. The idea of monotheism seems unquestioned.

While there are indications that at least some of the individual proverbs may have come from a later period, it seems quite reasonable to believe that a collection of wise sayings was collected in this period, and that a nucleus of that has been preserved in our present book. Other parts of the Book of Proverbs will be treated later (cf. pp. 308-311).

It was the prophets, however, who stamped their names indelibly on the age and its literary monuments. Hosea apparently concluded his work in the north not later than 735 B.C. Isaiah began his ministry in

Jerusalem a few years earlier. It is comparatively easy to follow his life and his thought when we rearrange the chronological order of the book that now bears his name.

The book of Isaiah has been called a library rather than the work of one mind. It has long been admitted that Isaiah xl.-lxvi. belongs to a period later than the time of Isaiah. Explanation for the present grouping of these chapters is not far to seek. The capacity of the average roll was about large enough to accommodate the present Isaiah, sixty-six chapters. The "Twelve," that is, the Minor prophets, evidently were always written on one roll, and contain just sixty-seven chapters. This is essentially the same size as the other general divisions of the Old Testament, *e.g.*, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, etc. Further, the last part of the book of Isaiah has much that is complementary to the first part. There are certain similarities in phrasing and vocabulary, and still more important is the fact that the thought is supplementary. The first preaches captivity, the second heralds the return; both are parts of one divine purpose. So though evidence suggests that at the time of the writing of Chronicles, about 300 B.C., Isaiah xl.-lxvi. was attributed to Jeremiah (cf. II Chr. xxxvi. 23, and Isa. xlv. 24-xlv. 7), we can easily appreciate the present companionship.

Even within chapters i.-xxxix. there are sections that belong to other days than those of Isaiah. The most important of these later additions are Isaiah xxxvi.-xxxix., which form an historical appendix to the prophecies, having been copied almost verbatim from II Kings xviii. 13-xx. 19; Isaiah xxi. 1-10; xxiii. 1-14, 15-18; xxxiv., xxxv., xix. 16-25, which describe the doom and predict the redemption of foreign nations or of Israel, in terms that assume the exile; and Isaiah xxiv.-xxvii., which is an apocalyptic vision. These

important additions will be studied when we come to the historical movements that were the occasion of their utterance. In no case is the value of these and other chapters less because we cannot assign them to Isaiah. Though anonymous, we hear in them the voice of the divine spirit, guiding and inspiring the people of God in their hour of need.

While this removes much of the present book from the man under whose name we have always read it, there still remains a body of literature of undisputed authorship which places Isaiah well up in the forefront among the great spiritual leaders. A careful study of the book shows that we have a large number of poems imbedded in historical narrative. The poetry is marked by a rare gift of imagination, coupled with happy, lucid phrasing, and expresses the highest moral and spiritual ideals. Most of the poems are very brief, ix. 8—x. 4 and v. 24—29, which seems to be a continuous poem in the order given, is the longest. It seems likely that these poems formed a part of the sermons of the prophet, for he was a preacher rather than a writer. Or some of them may be the sermons later reduced to poetic form. In the historical narratives we have in part Isaiah's autobiography (cf. vi., viii. 1—18), and in part the report of a third party (cf. vii., xxxvi.—xxxix.). The earliest edition of the book was likely made by one of his disciples. Later additions were made, and as the centuries passed, the larger additions and interpolations were added, until we have the book as it now stands.

Fully to appreciate the message we must, so far as possible, read it in its historical setting. The following chronological arrangement of part of the material, which is intended as a working basis, will with our knowledge of the times assist in following the activities of the prophet. The suggested dates are not so much those of the actual writing of the poem or

prose narrative, as the period to which the material refers.

Between 737 and 732 B.C. we may interpret the following passages:

- vi. 1-13—Personal experience, couched in form of a vision.
- ii. 5-22—Idolatry of Jacob described, and punishment threatened.
- v. 1-7—Parable of the vineyard. Israel's worthlessness.
- iii. 1—iv. 1 (iii. 19-24?) xxxii. 9-14—Corruption among the rulers and women of Judah, hence captivity inevitable.
- vii. 1—viii. 18—The sign given to Ahaz. Damascus and Samaria are to suffer within a few years.
- viii. 19-22—Necromancy condemned.
- xvii. 1-11—Ruin coming on Damascus.
- ix. 8—x. 4; v. 24-29—A poem with three divisions, each ending with the same refrain. "Emmanuel," signifies destruction to the sinful nation.

These messages all seem to come from the time between the call of the prophet and the fall of Damascus. A straightforward moral appeal is found in every one of the above fragments. The character of Yahweh is such that he can be absolutely trusted, and ought in all crises to be relied on by the nation. The most insistent, yet tender, appeal to repentance is everywhere present. But for a people hard of heart and dull of ear, only destruction lies ahead.

From 727 to 722 B.C., from the date of the death of Tiglath-Pileser to the fall of Samaria, there is a small body of literature:

- xiv. 28-32—A curse on Philistia.
- xxviii. 1-4—A woe upon Ephraim.
- xxiii. 1-14—The burden of Tyre.

In 711 B.C., or a little earlier, Isaiah began his spectacular, symbolic ministry concerning the punishment

of Egypt, Ethiopia, and the smaller allied states. The figure of this aristocrat going around like a barefoot, coatless peasant, must have appealed to the popular imagination, and created a strong sentiment against the alliance that was being formed with Egypt.

xx. 1-6—Isaiah goes around like the poorest slave.

xvii. 12-14—Uproar because of invasion.

xxi. 13-17—Dedanite caravans will be scattered.

xvi. 13-14—Moab will be crushed inside of three years.

xv. xvi. 1-12—An old prophecy against Moab, used by the prophet.

These seem to be the response of Isaiah to the coalition of neighboring nations that was being formed in those days against Assyria, under the wing of Egypt.

Preceding and during the siege of Sennacherib in 701 B.C., we have much that enables us to reconstruct the ancient scenes, and relive the ancient experiences.

xxviii. 7-20; xxx. 1-17; xxxi. 1-4; xviii. 1-6—All denounce in no uncertain terms the alliance that Judah has made with Egypt, and proclaim destruction.

xxix. 1-16—States that within a year, Jerusalem will suffer siege by an immense army because the city is full of debauchery and religious insincerity.

xxii. 15-25—Makes a virulent, personal attack on Shebna, a high official, who was possibly connected with the pro-Egyptian party that Isaiah so thoroughly disliked. He predicts his dismissal from office, and then proceeds to assist in the fulfillment of his own words (cf. xxxvi. 3).

x. 24-32—Urges the people of Zion to have no fear of the Assyrian, who is already approaching in the distance, and,

x. 5-19—Threatens the invader with punishment because of his arrogance.



Apparently, Jerusalem, immediately after her deliverance from Sennacherib, went wild with joy and reckless revelry. Isaiah reproached them because they had not learned their lesson:

xxii. 1-4—They had rejoiced in their own strength rather than looking to him who purposed it.

i. 1-31—So appropriately called the great arraignment, describes the actual conditions after 701 B.C. All is spoiled and desolate, and the people who have borne the rod of Yahweh's anger, the Assyrian siege, now turn to revelry on the one hand, and to ritual on the other. They are as forgetful and as unfaithful as they were before.

How many years Isaiah lived after this, we do not know. Historical landmarks are gone. Already he had been a central figure in the national life for forty years, and his influence and his word must have continued. He may indeed have taken part in the reform of Hezekiah, but whether he was then living or not, his influence upon many leaders of that day must have been permanent. History had in a very emphatic way vindicated his pronouncements, and the centuries also have acknowledged his principles.

The importance of his message makes a summary worth while. His life and thought were dominated by his initial religious experience, his vision in the temple.

He was at that time pondering what to his age was a vital theological question, why did good king Uzziah die a leper, which according to the orthodoxy of the day could only fall on the greatest sinners. A vision of Yahweh, the Holy One, separated from humanity chiefly by his moral nature, showed him the uncleanness of his own lips, and the corruption of all the people, and in the new light the old problem was superseded by a much more serious and more practical one. Hence he has a twofold message.

The whole nation is morally corrupt, every head is

sick, and every heart is faint, hence there must be repentance or punishment. No prophet more adequately expressed the demands of social righteousness than Isaiah, nor is any one more definite than he in declaring that the visitation of God on such people must bring destruction.

His second principle was that Yahweh, who is high and lifted up, is quite able to control all the affairs of state, and defend his own people, hence faith, trust in him, was the first law of national life. This he repeated in the two great crises of national history. In 734 B.C. he counseled Ahaz to "take heed and be quiet" (vii. 4), and when he was persuaded that the king had determined to call to his aid the material resources of Assyria, he concluded: If ye will not believe neither shall ye be relieved (vii. 9).

In 701 B.C., when Sennacherib came against Jerusalem, his counsel was the same. He assured them their affiliation with Egypt could only mean disaster, but, "in returning and rest ye shall be saved, in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (xxx. 15).

History affirms that Isaiah was confident that Yahweh would preserve the city (xxxvii. 6-7, 21-35). A passage that is often lifted quite out of its context, belongs to this period, and indicates his very profound conception of faith. When a party in Jerusalem gloried in their alliance with Egypt, and flattered themselves that the city would thereby be saved from the ravages of Assyria, Isaiah declared that the corner stone of Zion's safety was not national resources, but was faith: "he that believeth shall not make haste" (xxviii. 14-16).

Not only was his faith in Yahweh unshaken from the beginning, but also from the beginning he had faith in Israel's destiny. Shear Yashub, "a remnant shall return," was the name of his oldest son. He was a living witness, it is true, of a coming disaster, but

even more so of a returning remnant (vii. 3; x. 20-23). Just what the details of that deliverance would be, or how the kingdom would be reëstablished, does not seem to have interested the prophet. He had a vital message for most critical conditions, and in that there was no uncertain sound. His own experience was the foundation for his faith, which was strengthened by the group of disciples who gathered around him, and by the movements of history. The manifestation of Yahweh to him had been in the temple in Jerusalem. Hence it was no long step for him to believe in the inviolability of the city (cf. viii. 18; xviii. 7; xxviii. 16, 17; xxxi. 5). History and religion both pointed in that direction.

The city that was the hearth fire of Yahweh, could be the capital of none but a holy land, and its king could be nothing less than ideal. The splendid visions of the messianic kingdom, in which nature would be regenerated, and the ruler would be absolutely ideal, fill out the complement to the prophet's doctrine of faith (ix. 1-6, xi. 1-8). Some, because of the language and the isolation of these passages, feel that they fit better into the life and the hopes of the people of 550, or 500 B.C. or even centuries later, than they do in the time of Hezekiah. However that may be, they are the concrete expression apart from which Isaiah's faith would not be complete. They are the very climax of the conception of a redeemed nation and a redeeming God, both of which are related to Isaiah's doctrine of faith.

The book of Micah presents a somewhat similar, critical problem to that of Isaiah. We have, moreover, one sure landmark, we might say the surest in Old Testament prophecy. Micah iii. 12 is quoted in Jeremiah xxvi. 18, in 608 B.C., by Jeremiah's defenders as a precedent of a man who, in the reign of Hezekiah, denounced the city and still did not suffer death. This

vouches for both the date and the tone of Micah's message.

He was a country man, who, quite likely because of the Assyrian campaigns, came to Jerusalem to live. He saw city life with the clear eyes of an unsophisticated, honest, democratic, rustic lad. He was a kindred spirit to Amos, with a little more of an Elijah in his make-up. Along with a good literary gift he had a consuming passion for righteousness. The city civilization, with its follies, its iniquities, and its inequalities, appalled him. Kings and princes, prophets and priests, all were false, murderers, grafters, liars, drunkards, covetous, unclean and immoral; so were all the city-dwellers. The city itself was the cesspool of civilization. Samaria was the sin of Jacob, Jerusalem was the sin of Judah. Hence the city must be wiped out. Such was the message that this man, in stinging, scathing accents, poured out upon the corrupt city shortly before 701 B.C., when he saw the Assyrian army on the Palestinian horizon. Because of the moral condition, the city will surely be wiped out (iii. 12). Micah vi. 6-8, is the most comprehensive epitome of true religion we have in the early prophets. There are a number of sections in iv.-vii. that have the same tone as i.-iii., and may reasonably be accepted as from the same period (v. 10-14; vi. 9-16; vii. 1-6). The remaining parts of iv.-vii. have a quite different message, and seem to come from a very different atmosphere. In the above lies the assured contribution of Micah.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, 686-608 B.C.

#### THE REIGNS OF MANASSEH, AMON AND JOSIAH

##### KINGS

Manasseh	686
Amon	641
Josiah	639-608

II Kings xxi. 1—xxiii. 30; II Chronicles xxxiii.—xxxv.; Jeremiah i.—xii.; Zephaniah i.—iii.; Nahum; Deuteronomy.

#### A—THE REIGNS OF MANASSEH AND AMON

THE close of the reign of Hezekiah reached the high-water mark for spiritual religion in Judah up to that time. Isaiah and men who were like-minded must have been highly gratified. Religious reaction was, however, inevitable. The country shrines, sacred from the time of Abraham and honored by Jacob, Gideon, Samuel, and David, torn down by the invading Assyrian in 701 B.C., had also suffered indignities in the reforms of Hezekiah. Ancient symbols of worship, hallowed by centuries of religious experience, had been destroyed. Jerusalem and the temple priests had profited at the expense of the village altars and the country priesthood. The religious and social feelings of many people had been outraged by the prophets.



Isaiah's attack on the women (Isa. iii. 16-24), would scarcely be forgiven by the court beauties. Lovers of the pro-Assyrian policy of Ahaz were still living when Hezekiah died. Indignation and jealousy because of the past reforming and prophetic régime must have been prevalent.

Then a boy of twelve, Manasseh came to the throne (II Kgs. xxi. 1-18). Assyria's sun was now at the zenith. Judah and her neighbors were tributary to this, the most commanding nation of the world, why not be allied to her religiously? There must have been dissension at court and throughout the land. Civil warfare, most relentless because of religious motives, is a fair interpretation of the report: "Manasseh shed innocent blood very much till he filled Jerusalem from one end to the other." The individual contestants, the length of time occupied, the part Isaiah played, if any, cannot even be conjectured, but the ultimate triumph of the pro-Assyrian, anti-reform party is certain.

Our records are brief but definite. Manasseh, who while he bears the brunt of condemnation, was supported by, perhaps was even the tool of the victorious party, completely restored the worship of the old-time religion. The high places again flourished. Ashera and pillars were again erected. Sun worship was reëstablished in Jerusalem. Assyrian altars again found a place in the temple. Altars to the queen of heaven were built on many house tops. Divination assumed an important place, and the old Semitic evidences of devotion to deity, as child sacrifice, were reinstated (II Kgs. xxi. 2-7). Such was the tenor of his reign of fifty-five years according to the account in Kings. The Assyrian chronicles adds little that throws any light on the story.

Yet in world politics these were great days. Senacherib of Assyria came to an untimely end in 681 B.C.

at the hand of two of his sons who fled the country (II Kgs. xix. 37). Esarhaddon (681-668 B.C.), another son, came to the throne and was in turn succeeded by his son Ashurbanipal (668-626 B.C.). From 681 to 646 B.C. there were constant revolts of subject peoples, east, west, and south, which were in every field promptly, sometimes mercilessly, put down. Esarhaddon rebuilt in a very generous way the rebel city Babylon which his father in 689 B.C. had completely destroyed. He conquered the revolting Medes, defeated northern hordes in 677 B.C., subdued Sidon in the west, and colonized Samaria in 674 and again in 673 B.C. (cf. Ezra iv. 2). Then in 670 B.C. he sent his armies into Egypt, and after severe fighting took Memphis, and had himself crowned king of Egypt, while Tirhakah had to take refuge in Thebes.

Manasseh was in these years a faithful subject of Esarhaddon. In two early Assyrian records he is numbered among the tributary states. He is reported to have sent building material for the palace of the king in Nineveh in 674 B.C., and in the Egyptian campaign in 670 B.C., mention is made of a contingent of soldiers that he furnished.

Ashurbanipal had to send his army twice into Egypt, and the second time, in 600 B.C., he pushed up the Nile as far as Thebes, which he conquered. Tyre was sieged in the same campaign, and though not completely reduced, paid tribute to Assyria along with neighboring states. Babylonia revolted in 652 B.C., and drew together a strong alliance of neighboring states. Almost seven years were taken to reduce the city, but in 646 B.C. Assyria was free to punish Arabians and others who had either been actively connected with the Babylonian rebellion or had in the hour of Assyria's greatest difficulty repudiated their allegiance.

Nowhere in the Assyrian chronicles nor in Kings

is there any mention of disloyalty on the part of Manasseh. It is not impossible, however, that during the Babylonian revolt he may have been lined up with Moab, Edom, and Tyre, and that such may be the basis of a story in Chronicles (II Chr. xxxiii. 11-13), which was further enlarged in the booklet, the Prayer of Manasseh.

The military activities of these two Assyrian monarchs were brilliant, though exhausting to a degree, but a more worthy fame belongs to each. Esarhaddon was a great builder, and his chief interest lay in temple architecture. Nineveh was enriched, and Babylon was restored. At least thirty temples, in various cities throughout the land, and especially the great temple to Ashur in Nineveh, were built or beautified by his orders. His successor was likewise a builder, and to him was due the chief glory of Nineveh. But his literary interest, as shown by his great palace library in Nineveh, consisting of tens of thousands of clay tablets was Ashurbanipal's greatest contribution to history. His scribes diligently copied the old records of Assyria and Babylonia, and brought together the greatest collection of history, poetry, theology, and science ever collected in one place up to that time, so far as is known. Such were the achievements and interests of Manasseh's overlords.

Amon reigned two years. He was slain by the court servants, and the people of the land slew the regicides (II Kgs. xxi. 19-24). No more is said. Was it another religious revolution? Were the court servants dissatisfied with the long Assyrian régime, or was the new king influenced by another group of religious leaders? Who knows?

*A Half Century of Silence*—During nearly half a century, the time of the reign of these two kings, not only are the historical records meager, but the Old Testament literature fails to produce the name of a

writer or a preacher who was proclaiming the word of Yahweh. Where were the disciples of Isaiah or the successors of Amos and Micah? Some think that parts of Micah, iv.-vii., may have been written during the early days of Manasseh. But the sons of the prophets, where were they? Slain were many of them. Tradition says that Isaiah was sawn asunder, and this may well be the fact, for the leading spirit of reform in the days of Hezekiah would not long be tolerated under the changed régime.

But thorough as the revolution was, many must have escaped and fled to cover. Silent they may have been, but not idle. Downcast, but not all of Isaiah's followers could have lost confidence in Yahweh. They had a half a century in which to con over the experiences of the nation and the religious contributions of the prophets, to reinterpret in the light of wider knowledge the ancient laws and customs, to put in writing perhaps some of their noblest inspirations, and to prepare, yes, perhaps to plot, for the hour that was sure to come. It is scarcely safe to conjecture what part, if any, the prophetic party had in the civil strife at the end of Amon's life, but there is no doubt that they profited by the change.

## B—THE REIGN OF JOSIAH

Josiah's reign (639-608 B.C.) has little significance in world history. Jerusalem was now practically the limit of his kingdom. A hundred years of Assyrian warfare and splendor had sapped her strength, and the last half of the reign of Ashurbanipal showed many signs of decay. Psamtik I (664-610 B.C.), the Egyptian king, began his long siege of Ashdod in 639 B.C. In 626 B.C. on the death of Ashurbanipal, Babylonia declared her independence. The next year Nineveh was besieged by Umman Manda, but was saved by

the approach of the Scythians, who were allies of Assyria.

These Scythians, a barbarian people from the steppes between the Don and the Danube, began pouring down into Asia Minor and Mesopotamia about 650 B.C. In 630 B.C., having made a formal alliance with Assyria, they came down through Syria, an unorganized horde of swiftly-moving horsemen and wagons, bent chiefly on plunder, bringing terror to the inhabitants, and finally menacing Egypt. They were easily bought off and turned back at the frontier of Egypt, and went back the way they had come, without inflicting on Judah the disaster generally feared. Bethshean in Esdraelon, according to tradition, was settled by a group of these retiring marauders.

Necho II of Egypt (610-594 B.C.), in 608 B.C., aware of the weakness of Nineveh, determined to share in the spoils. He led his army along the highway of Philistia, reduced Gaza and Askelon, and at Megiddo, perhaps Migdol near the Philistine territory (so Herodotus), was flanked by Josiah with a small Judean army. Why the king of Jerusalem was so foolhardy we can scarcely conjecture. He surely did not now consider himself an ally of Assyria. Was he anxious to extend his domain to the old-time Israelitish boundary? Could he believe because of his reform of the worship, which he had inaugurated in 621 B.C. that he and his army must be invulnerable to the spear-thrust of the mighty foe? Whatever the cause, he would listen to no reason, obtruded his army in the pathway of Egypt, and, perhaps the victim of his faith, died on the battlefield. The good king was greatly mourned by the people, and months after his death, Jeremiah rebuked them for their long protracted lamentation (Jer. xxii. 10, 16), and elegies were even centuries later sung over him by the professional singers of Israel (II Chr. xxxv. 25).



## C—THE PROPHETS AND THE REFORM

*Zephaniah*—"The reformation of Josiah" was the event of chief importance in his reign. It is not likely that the boy of eight had any very definite personal convictions when he came to the throne. But in his early years there was a new spirit in the air. *Zephaniah*, a young man, possibly a relative of the king, born in the heyday of Manasseh's power, as his name, "Yahweh hides," would indicate, was so stirred by events religious and political that he could not hold his peace.

To this young prophet the city seemed ripe for destruction. Polluted, oppressing, and unjust so that she was shameless; her judges a pack of wolves; her prophets treacherous; her priests profane; all her leaders practical atheists; how could a God of justice and light tolerate her any longer? Add to this her Baalism, her sun-worship, her horrible Moloch worship, and her numerous foreign religious customs practiced in the name of Yahweh, surely the last day had come!

How was Yahweh going to punish the city for this moral and religious apostasy? The cloud of Scythians on the distant horizon loomed up before the prophet. Surely they were the guests consecrated by Yahweh for his great banquet (*Zeph. i. 7-13*). Surely they were bringing in the day of wrath, a day of distress and desolation, of waste and darkness, a day of gloom and of cloud, yea of thundercloud, a day of trumpet, and of battle cry (*Zeph. i. 15-16*).

Perhaps about 630 B.C. his voice was raised aloud in protest. He seized on an old popular conception, the day of Yahweh, and transformed it to his purpose. It was a phrase of ancient origin, used by those who expected Yahweh, the God of battles, miraculously to overthrow all enemies, and establish Israel as a nation simply because he was their God. Amos had already

given it moral content (Amos i. 2). Likewise Zephaniah, striking out against the moral corruptions and the prevailing foreign ritual, conceived that the day of Yahweh was primarily ethical. He further declared it to be disciplinary, that it would be immediate, and would involve all the near neighbors of Judah (Zeph. i. 14, 15; ii. 4-7, 12-14). In this we find some of the features that are later developed in apocalyptic literature. The message in Zephaniah iii. 14-20 is universally admitted to be post-exilic.

*Jeremiah*—At the same time a young man of whom we know much more than we do of Zephaniah appeared on the scene. Jeremiah belonged to the family of exiled priests who were in Anathoth, but he shows none of the priestly characteristics (cf. I Kgs. ii. 26, 27). In 626 B.C. he began his ministry with a bitter tirade against the sins of the nation. The substance of his message for the first five years of his preaching has been preserved in Jeremiah ii.-vi. His diagnosis of the situation was similar to that of his contemporary, though he centered his attack on the moral apostasy which he considered without parallel in religious history (ii. 9-13). The arguments and the figures used are among the most scathing in literature (cf. ii. 20-28). Swift punishment at the hands of the dreaded Scythian cavalry must be the coming punishment for these flagrant sins (iv. 11-vi. 26).

*The Reform Activity*—That two prophets could utter words like these in Jerusalem and escape, shows that the tide had already turned. Further, the nation was in no fear of the Assyrian, for under a weak ruler, who was beset by strong foes, she was already in her death throes. If Assyria could not now harm, neither could her gods help, would be the popular line of argument. Those who were eager for the reform of conditions had now everything on their side.

In 621 B.C., King Josiah sent his officers to repair cer-

tain breaches in the temple, the origin of which we know nothing (II Kgs. xxii. 2—xxiii.). In the work of renovation a scroll was found and read by Hilkiah the priest. He deemed it of sufficient value to pass it on to Shaphan, the king's scribe, who read it to the king. Its contents were startling. Its precepts, though simple, had never been observed. It called down the divine wrath on all who varied from its statutes. The king sent a committee to Huldah, an aged prophetess, to obtain her judgment. She declared that it was a true word of Yahweh, and ought to be obeyed. The king called a convocation of the elders and all the people of Jerusalem. The roll was read in their hearing, and they accepted it as the will of Yahweh, and pledged themselves to keep the statutes and the commandments.

Then the work of reform began in earnest, and the city and neighboring villages were cleansed of their idolatry. The last vestiges of Baal worship, of sun worship, of Moloch worship, together with their priests and their attendants and the houses of the temple prostitutes were destroyed. Objects such as the Ashera, that like the Nehushtan in Hezekiah's time, had been there beyond memory, were pulled down and burned in the Kidron. The high places in the villages were razed to the ground, and the reforming zeal did not stop till it reached as far north as Bethel. Then a great passover, an innovation in part, as it was observed in Jerusalem instead of in the home of the individual (cf. Ex. xii. 21–27, J.), was held, as the signal celebration of the reform.

This reformation, described with so much minutiae in Kings, had three important features. It was ritualistic, but the worship was purified as it had not been even in the searching reforms of Hezekiah. It now was cleansed from all objects of worship, and was made imageless. Further, its keynote was the centralization

of worship. The hillside altars were no longer legitimate, and the sacrifice, the feasts, and the passover must be observed only in the Jerusalem temple. The third fact is, that it grew out of a book which Judah formally accepted as its authority in matters of faith and practice. Having fulfilled so zealously all the requirements of this book, they might now expect all the promised national blessing.

*The Book of the Law*—A most interesting and important question is, can we to-day identify the book of the law? A law so vital could surely not be lost, and one so fully described should not be difficult to locate. Scholars for centuries, going back as early as the time of Jerome, have conceded that Deuteronomy xii.-xxvi., xxviii., or Deuteronomy xii.-xix., xxviii., or all the book of Deuteronomy, fully meets all the requirements of the reform as indicated in Kings. Strange to say, the failure to enforce one of the regulations of Deuteronomy, *viz.*, that the priests at the high places should be privileged to serve in the temple in Jerusalem, is acknowledged in a rather apologetic note (Dt. xviii. 6-8; cf. II Kgs. xxiii. 9). Beyond this there are many evidences that leave little room for doubt. It is a book of cursings and blessings such as might strike terror into the guilty (cf. Dt. xxviii.). It is ritualistic in all its parts, and demands that sacrifice, festivals, and passover should be observed at the central sanctuary (Dt. xii. 2-5, 8, 13, 18, 26; xvi. 2, 5, 6, 11, 15, 16). It bans all images (Dt. xvi. 21, 22; xii. 3), and the religious festivals are now made national rather than domestic. In fact Deuteronomy xii.-xix., xxviii., is adequate for all the requirements of the reform as reported in Kings.

But this introduces another question that is of no less vital interest to us. Who wrote this book of the law? A few simple propositions will help us to a conclusion. It must have been a comparatively small

roll. The impression is that it could be read through perhaps at one sitting. As we read the story we could not think of it being equivalent to our Pentateuch, which could not have been written on one of the old rolls. Further, it was a roll that was unknown to the religious leaders, and its most important provisions had never been enforced or even referred to in religious history. A central sanctuary had never been observed previously.

Yet we can clearly see definite influences in the life of the nation pointing towards all the principle regulations that were adopted at this time. The divine finger in history had for centuries been pointing very definitely towards centralization of worship. The temple in Jerusalem, because of its splendor, had at once gained a preëminence, and every century had added to its dignity. The fall of Samaria in 722 B.C. left it without any rival. The destruction of the village altars by the army of Sennacherib in 701 B.C., and the escape of Jerusalem again added to its prestige. The message of Isaiah, and his indignant reply to the Assyrian ambassadors, "the virgin daughter of Zion hath laughed thee to scorn," climaxed the testimony of history, and was sufficient to convince all but the most skeptical that the temple was Yahweh's special care, and that his abode was there as in no other place.

Hosea had attacked the idolatry and immorality carried on at the high places, and all the religious-minded men of Judah must have realized the social menace involved in this licentious worship which never could be supervised so long as there was a multitude of shrines, each one independent of the other. It was evident that one sanctuary, carefully guarded by a purified priesthood, trained in a cleansed ritual, alone could provide a pure worship, and prevent the license and lust that was prevalent in other places. Thus, in general, the movement towards Deuteronomy seems



plain and points to the times following Hosea and Isaiah.

Many of the details of the book likewise bear the earmarks of history. In fact, most of the laws in the judgments of C.C. are again found here, but in a form suited to the industrial rather than to the agricultural life. When we compare, by way of illustration, the law for the male slave Exodus xxi. 2-6 with Deuteronomy xv. 12-18 and of the female slave Exodus xxi. 7-11 with Deuteronomy xv. 17, we find that Deuteronomy is manifestly a reinterpretation of the earlier law, in order to meet more advanced industrial and ethical conditions.

The whole case then, which might be greatly elaborated is that Deuteronomy is the crystallization of a long process. Custom and law, some of which may run back even to pre-Mosaic times, which through long centuries had been interpreted and elaborated under the divine spirit which moved in men who are unnamed, in as marked a way as in those whose names we revere, were reinterpreted in the spirit of the reforming prophets of the eighth century long enough before 621 B.C. that the book had been lost sight of completely. The last influence required for the book was in 701 B.C.

While we cannot be dogmatic, we are at least permitted to wonder if some soul, deeply versed in the custom and history of his people, a disciple of the great prophets, a man waiting reverently on Yahweh, while in forced retirement under the bloody Manasseh, fused together with prophetic insight some of the honored customs of his fathers, interpreted them in the light of growing needs, wove them into a warp of precept that was essentially prophetic and for private or public use inscribed them on a roll. The writer of this book was both prophet and priest, and his literary work might quite naturally be kept in some corner of one

of the many store chambers around the temple. Did he pass away peacefully without revealing to any one the secret of his hidden treasure, or was he a passionate propagandist who under Manasseh died a martyr to his faith? We know not. But that he was a good man, a lover of ritual, yet with undimmed prophetic vision, a conservator of the best in the past, yet a fearless reformer, withal a man of God, this is witnessed by his imperishable message.

Perhaps no book ever laid hold more completely on any people than did Deuteronomy on the people of Judah. It holds a remarkable poise between ritual and righteousness; in fact, it institutionalized the message of prophecy. It magnified the one people, who must worship the one God, in one sanctuary, and whose whole lives should be controlled by one motive, love. It was heartily accepted by an enthusiastic people as their law of life, and they speedily became the "people of the book."

*Jeremiah and the Reform*—Jeremiah was living during these stirring days. What was his relation to this reform movement? This is a live issue. Some have held that he was too intense a moralist and too clear-sighted spiritually to lend his assistance to a movement that was essentially ritualistic and that made a book rather than the living word the source of religious authority. While much may be said for this side of the case, evidence seems to point the other way. Jeremiah's spiritual discernment had a history, and shows evident development. Further, while the reform was ritualistic, it likewise cut at the root of social immorality and flagrant injustice. The absence of his name from the group mentioned in Kings as important in the organization of the reform is not strange. Jeremiah was an individualist from the beginning. He was never at any time popular, and to have connected him in an official way with it might

not have added to its kindly reception. What he did he may have done independently.

The book of Jeremiah indicates that he made a preaching tour through the villages of Judah declaring "the words of the covenant" (xi. 1-13). His message was an attack on idolatry, multiplicity of gods, and iniquity in general. The passage is Deuteronomic in spirit and language, but there seems no adequate reason to doubt its historicity. His attack on the local conditions and the local shrines was naturally unacceptable to the people, and he deemed them beyond repentance. In his itinerary he came to his home village, Anathoth (xi. 18-23). To the disinherited priests, with the memory of lost priestly prestige of three hundred years earlier, and with the local sanctuary always overshadowed by the temple, the demand for the centralization of all worship was unthinkable. That a native villager should advocate it was unbearable. They determined to get rid of this disturber of the peace, but he anticipated their plot and escaped.

Then we find this conscientious man in the throes of emotional reaction (xii. 1-5). Reverently he questions the divine providence. Why are people who are so treacherous and so false, so prosperous? Here we are at the parting of the ways in religious history. Orthodoxy said, wickedness brings calamity, goodness insures prosperity (cf. Dt. xxviii. 1-24). But Jeremiah had personal experience that did not run true to the theory. Others, as Habakkuk and Job, took up the theme later and developed it. In the case of Jeremiah the answer is not academic but is experimental. The attention is turned from the intellectual question to the hard facts of life, and the summary of the answer might be put, "Jeremiah, there is worse ahead, brace up and face life as it is" (xii. 5).

*Union of J. E. Documents*—During these years, prob-

ably in the early part of the period, the field of literature was enriched by the union of the J.E. narratives. With the fall of Ephraim in 722 B.C., the danger arose of losing permanently all the northern literary documents. That many have perished is evident from the number of books referred to, of which we have no other record. Some of the Israelites, notwithstanding the ancient feuds, felt their kinship with Judah, and maintained some religious affiliation. Some of these people moved south after the fall of their own kingdom. Their narrative of ancient history that we call E. was likely carried to the south shortly after 722 B.C. There it was joined to J., the two placed side by side, and woven together as is still the custom of certain Oriental history writers (cf. p. 48).

*Deuteronomic Activity*—After 621 B.C. there was an unusual literary renaissance. The law captured the imagination of many people. If only a nucleus of the book was used for the reform, it is quite certain it was not long before Deuteronomy was practically in its present shape. It also awakened an activity that continued throughout most of the next half century.

*Nahum*—The little book of Nahum, a poetic outburst, belongs to the closing years of Josiah. The singer in two poems vindictively gloats over the destruction that is at the very gate of Nineveh (Nah. ii. 3-13 and iii. 1-19). These, as well as i. 11, 14; ii. 1, are poetic and passionate, but express more of the spirit we usually attribute to that group of patriots, often called false prophets, who, apart from moral considerations, were always ready to praise their own and condemn all other nations, than the spirit of the great prophets. The prophet, of whom we know nothing but the name, may have had personal experience with the brutal Assyrians, that stirred his ire. His message is a lasting expression of the judgment that a policy of ruthlessness and greed always merits disaster.

It is a crude, or perhaps a very human, way of stating the principle that unrighteousness cannot go unpunished in a world that is righteously governed.

Nahum i. 2-10 is an acrostic poem, which has a strongly eschatological flavor to it. It delights in the confidence that Yahweh, a jealous God, will see his vengeance on his foes. It, as well as i. 12, 13, 15, ii. 2, comes from a later date than the above-mentioned poems.



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAH, 608-586, B.C.

#### THE KINGS

Jehoiakim	608
Jehoiakin	597
Zedekiah	597-586

II KINGS XXIII. 30—XXV. 30; II CHRONICLES XXXVI. 1-31; JEREMIAH VII.-IX., XIII.-LII.; HABAKKUK; EZEKIEL I.-XXXIX.

#### A—THE REIGNS OF JEHOAHAZ AND JEHOIAKIM

ON the death of Josiah, the "people of the land" again asserted themselves, and crowned Jehoahaz, the second son of Josiah, king (II Kgs. xxiii. 30). It was an act of rebellion against Egypt who was now master of Judah. Necho, who after the defeat of Josiah had gone forth to Riblah, sent for the new king, put him in chains, and sent him a prisoner to Egypt, where he remained till his death (II Kgs. xxiii. 30-34).

He then appointed Eliakim, the oldest son of Josiah, as his local representative in Judah, and in honor of Yahweh changed his name to Jehoiakim, that is, "Yahweh will raise up" (II Kgs. xxiii. 34-35). Jehoiakim, most likely had been pro-Egyptian before his appointment to the throne, and now, at the behest of the Pharaoh, he taxed Judah for the required tribute. Though the royal treasury must have been bankrupt, he insisted on building a great palace and living in

splendor at the public expense, and so brought down the wrath of the prophets (cf. Jer. xxii. 13-19).

It was during the early days of this reign that Jeremiah uttered one of his boldest messages (Jer. vii. 1-viii. 22). Thirteen years had now passed since the inception of the great reform, and some of the tendencies were already apparent. Morally, there had been no lasting improvement on the part of the nation. Religiously, they were hopelessly confident. The prophet perceived that the reform had not gone deeply enough, and that the gravest dangers had resulted. The people now gloried that the temple of Yahweh was in their midst, and quoted history to prove its inviolability. He pointed to the destruction of Shiloh, and from the temple steps thundered his anathemas against their insensibility to moral conditions (Jer. vii. 1-15; cf. xxvi. 1-7). They pointed to their lavish sacrifice and their whole burnt-offering, and concluded that therefore they had the favor of Yahweh. He asserted that the commands of Yahweh in the wilderness were not in respect to burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but were for a worthy manner of life (Jer. vii. 21-23). They boasted that they had the book of the law and hence they were wise; he retorted that their law was the work of false scribes, for it prevented them listening to the living word of God (Jer. viii. 8-9). Passionately he insisted that there was no security for Judah, in altars, or sacrifices, or law book, but only, "if ye thoroughly mend your ways and your doings, if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor, if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed no innocent blood, but walk in the ways that I command you" (Jer. vii. 5, 6).

Because of this utterance it is no wonder that the prophets and the priests took him to court where he was tried for treason. He escaped because he had powerful friends at court, and they were able to appeal

to the case of Micah and his message (Jer. xxvi. 1-19). The man who was bold enough to challenge and denounce the ceremonial and religious customs of his generation, was indeed an "iron pillar and brazen walls against the whole land."

In the north, the great kingdom of Assyria, was engaged in its death struggle. Exhausted by its scores of victories, its strength depleted by the splendor of palaces, libraries, and temples, now ruled by a weakling, its capital was seized by the Medes, the allies of the now independent Babylonians. Nineveh was captured in 606 B.C., and razed to the ground. If Nahum was living at this time, he saw his heart's desire accomplished. All the Assyrian territory to the west, that is, Mesopotamia and Syria, went as spoil to Nabopolassar, king of Babylonia (626-605 B.C.).

Only by force, however, could the allegiance and tribute of Syria be retained. In 605 B.C., Nebuchadrezzar led the Babylonian army west, and at Carchemish met Necho with his Egyptian forces. The combat was disastrous for Pharaoh who fled precipitately to the home land. How far Nebuchadrezzar followed the retreating host is uncertain, perhaps even as far as the border of Egypt (Jer. xli. 1-26). His victory, however, was complete, and all Syria acknowledged the sway of this new world-power (II Kgs. xxiv. 7). In 604 B.C., on the death of his royal father, the young general was summoned back to Babylonia, and entered on his long reign of forty-two years. Thus Jehoiakim of Judah, by the fortunes of war, in which he was perhaps only an interested onlooker, became, in 604 B.C., a vassal to Babylonia.

*The New Problem*—Such world convulsions must have provided food for reflection to all serious-minded men. Assyria, the ancient tyrant of the west, had been crushed into the dust. Necho's mighty army was so cut to pieces that it never again ventured beyond

its own border. An old and glorious nation, a rebel for a century, with new blood in its veins and under new leadership, had suddenly risen on the wreckage of empire and attained the premier place in world politics. What was the destiny, what the purpose of this new empire? That was the question of the hour to religious thinkers. Jeremiah was one of the men who pondered the question. Where did Nebuchadrezzar belong in the development of the moral order, what was his function? To the prophet the answer became apparent. Yahweh had sent his prophets rebuking the injustice and the dishonesty of the leaders, but they had not mended their ways. Severer methods must be used. Hence, Nebuchadrezzar was called to be the servant of Yahweh to punish Judah and the surrounding nations for their sins (Jer. xxv. 1-11). Such was the prophet's interpretation of contemporary movements.

Another virile mind became engrossed with the great moral issues of the hour. Habakkuk, called the great skeptic, had his eyes open to some of the outstanding facts. He had known of, perhaps had taken a part in, the reform of 621 B.C. By 605 B.C., when he first writes, the results were patent. Strife and contention were everywhere, justice was a failure, the law was a dead letter, and wickedness triumphed over righteousness. In the face of these facts, where was the proof of the moral order, is his question. Why does Yahweh permit this flagrant injustice (i. 2-4)?

The answer loomed up on the northern horizon. That ancient nation, the Chaldean, (Babylonian) was already on the move; swifter than leopards, fiercer than the wolf pack, they were the messengers of terror and destruction. Yet Yahweh through them would accomplish a marvelous work, which must be the punishment of the guilty (i. 5-11).

Later, perhaps years after, when the prophet has

had the opportunity of knowing from personal contact the work of the Babylonian army, and has been able to contrast them with the people of Judah, another, an even more serious, question was raised. Why is it that Yahweh uses a worse people to punish a better, was the second plaint. "O Yahweh, thou hast ordained him for judgment, and thou, O Rock, hast established him for correction. . . . Wherefore lookest thou on them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy peace when the wicked swalloweth up the man that is more righteous than he . . ." (i. 12-17).

Habakkuk pondered this question, patiently went on with his immediate duty "on his watch tower," and in due time came the answer. "His soul is puffed up, it is not upright in him, but the just shall live in his faithfulness" (ii. 1-4). Interpreted, it means: the arrogance of the Babylonian is fatal, the faithfulness of Judah is its own reward. Character carries in itself blessing or cursing. This prophet, of whom we have no history, living in the midst of national calamities, separated the shadow from the substance and gripped realities. Character as its own reward, or the reign of law in the moral realm is one of the most vital conceptions of religion. It was a far reach from the temporal prosperity of Deuteronomy as the sign of goodness to the faith of this man that goodness in itself was a blessing. The remaining part of chapter ii. is occupied with illustrations showing how sin returns boomerang-like on the head of the sinning nation. The third chapter, which is a poem, closes with the same idea. Though temporal prosperity, in all its accustomed forms, which was the recognized evidence of being in favor with God, should fail, "yet will I joy in the God of my salvation" (iii. 17-19).

In 604 B.C. Jeremiah was constrained to put his previous messages, reaching over twenty-two years, into literary form (Jer. xxxvi. 1-32). Baruch wrote at his



dictation, and then read the completed roll on a fast day in December at the entry into the temple before the assembled worshipers. Later it was read before the princes, and they brought it to the king, before whom it was again read. This son of Josiah showed his complete disregard for the message by cutting up and burning the parchment. His moral and religious attitude are both revealed by this act, and we do not wonder that Jeremiah's words concerning him were scathing. The prophet then rewrote his message and "added beside them many like words." Most of this edition of Jeremiah is to be found in Jeremiah i.-xii.

*Jehoiakim Rebels*—In 601 B.C., after three years' vassalage to Babylonia, Jehoiakim, influenced by the general world restlessness that followed the crash of Assyria, as well as by the intrigues of Egypt to which he was partial to the last, withheld tribute from his overlord. Raiding bands of Babylonians, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, all allies of Babylonia, were sent to reduce him to submission (II Kgs. xxiv. 2). But he was obstinate, and was supported by many of his leaders. Jeremiah met this shallow confidence with his usual vigor (Jer. xviii. 1—xx. 18). But little heed was given to him. The leaders were involved in the petty revolt of the nations. The die was cast, there was no repentance and no submission. In 598 B.C. Nebuchadrezzar marched his troops against the city, but before the city was invested Jehoiakim passed from the scene and left the inheritance of his political sins to his son, Jehoiakin (II Kgs. xxiv. 6-17).

The manner of the death of the king has been the subject of difference of opinion. The book of Kings tells us he died a natural death and was buried in the royal cemetery (II Kgs. xxiv. 6). Jeremiah, in a moment of indignation, predicted that he should be "drawn and cast forth outside the city" on the refuse heap, like any common carcass (Jer. xxii. 19). This

was what ought to happen in a moral universe to a man of such a character. The chronicler tells us that he was bound in fetters by Nebuchadrezzar to carry him to Babylon (II Chr. xxxvi. 6). This is, no doubt, a tradition that was common in his day. The writer of the Kings most likely gives us the historical fact.

## B—THE REIGNS OF JEHOIAKIN AND ZEDEKIAH

Jehoiakin faced the siege for three months and then capitulated (II Kgs. xxiv. 8–17). The temple and the palaces were stripped of all their treasure. Ten thousand of the flower of the land, princes and officers, craftsmen and smiths, heads of families, were deported and settled in waste territory of Babylonia. The young king, his mother, and servants were among the captives. He was imprisoned, to be released and treated as a royal captive after thirty-seven years' confinement in Babylonian dungeons (II Kgs. xxv. 27–30). Jeremiah broke out in two elegies, one on the fallen nation, the other on the king and the queen mother, who were involved in the national guilt (Jer. xiii. 15–27; xxii. 24–30). Ezekiel also in his own figurative way describes the tragic fate of the young prince (Ezk. xix. 3–9).

Zedekiah (597–586 B.C.), a son of Josiah, was now given charge of Judah, as a Babylonian state, under Nebuchadrezzar (II Kgs. xxiv. 17–20; Jer. xxii.–xxiv., xxvii.–xxix.). It was a gratuitous task. The province was small and stripped to the bone. The best element, industrially and religiously, had been transplanted to Babylonia. The less conspicuous princes and artisans, the poor and the oppressed, who were left behind, had now attained unaccustomed responsibility. The tribute to Babylon was a considerable item. Only one policy could save Judah. But in this extremity,

the only man sane enough to see it and strong enough to announce it was a prophet who was held in bad repute.

Jeremiah had the vision. He held a private interview with the new king in the name of Yahweh, and placed before him the alternatives, social reform or national ruin (Jer. xxii. 1-9). He sent a letter to the exiles assuring them that it was the will of God that they should remain there for over a generation (Jer. xxix. 1-32). Hence, they should build houses, marry and rear children, seek the welfare of the land, and pray for its prosperity.

But he stood almost alone. Self-seekers to whom office was new, inferior minds that could not grasp world-politics, blind patriots who could not see beyond the present moment, and worst of all, insolent prophets, who had not yet learned the moral nature of Yahweh, but thought of him as a tribal deity, such were the leaders of the people. And the people, the poor and the oppressed, for whose rights the prophets had fought, did not they think the long promised ruin had at last fallen on their tyrants, and could they not with a degree of logic conclude that they themselves were the remnant and had now entered into their inheritance? Thus boasting themselves in their deliverance, they became more iniquitous than their old oppressors. Rotten figs was the prophet's contemptuous characterization of them (Jer. xxiv. 1-10).

In 593 B.C. ambassadors from all the neighboring nations gathered in Jerusalem, and decided to revolt from Babylonia and form alliances with Egypt (Jer. xxvii. 2-6). Jeremiah was impressed by the seriousness of the contemplated action. He registered his conviction and sent it to the individual kings by their messengers, who had come to Jerusalem to the conference, that Babylonia was the servant of Yahweh to punish the

nations for their sins, that loyalty to his yoke was the only safety, and that the Babylonian lordship would extend beyond the present generation (Jer. xxvii.-xxix. 15). A local prophet named Hananiah challenged his viewpoint, and Jerusalem was treated to a wordy war between prophets, in which Jeremiah seems to have had rather the better of the argument. It was perhaps about this time that Jeremiah delivered himself, with breaking heart, it is true, but nevertheless in terms that no one could misunderstand, on the corrupt practices of the prophets (Jer. xxiii. 9-40).

It was also at this time and as the result of the conspiracy that Zedekiah was called to Babylon, where it is most likely he had to renew his covenant with Nebuchadrezzar (Jer. li. 59-64; Ezk. xvii. 12-15). The letter that Jeremiah sent on that occasion at the hand of Seraiah, one of the officers of the expedition, its attitude towards Babylon, and his injunctions about its disposal reveals the interest of the prophet in the group of exiles (Jer. li. 59-64).

The following year (592 B.C.) a young captive, living at Kebar, a few miles southeast of the city of Babylon, was moved by the divine spirit to utter himself through strange symbols. For a number of years, in various ways, he symbolized the coming siege of Jerusalem, the hunger and thirst, the pestilence and terror in the city (Ezk. iv. 1-v. 17; vi. 1-14). Judgment was decreed because of the moral depravity and the ritual abominations of her people. In 591 B.C. he again declared the guilt of Jerusalem and her coming punishment, and in the form of a vision he showed some of the secret ritualistic practices of the priesthood (viii. 1-xi. 12). As he was a priest we cannot doubt but that here, he was presenting facts with which he himself was familiar. They make our blood run cold. Canaanitish, Egyptian, and Babylonian idolatry

were practiced. Forms of reptiles and various abominable beasts were portrayed all around on the walls. Totemism and nature worship were intermingled with sun worship. The rites were licentious. Elders and priests were the leaders. The morals of the people were sadly corrupted by the worship, and Yahweh had taken his departure from the temple. We cannot wonder that Ezekiel, a priest, considered the abominable pagan ritual that appealed to superstition and passion as the essential cause of the coming overthrow (ix. 1; xi. 12).

Jeremiah by his insistent opposition to the Egyptian alliance perhaps helped to stem the tide of revolt until 588 B.C., when Hophra came to the throne of Egypt. The new king was ambitious, and stirred up the pro-Egyptian party in Jerusalem by promises of assistance in their struggle for independence. Judah, thus encouraged, again rebelled, and swiftly the blow fell. Nebuchadrezzar sent his army, in which were troops from Moab, Ammon, and Edom, and closely sieged the city. After eleven months the people, in great straits, sought in some way to appease the wrath of God. They put an old law, which had apparently been a dead letter, into operation, made it a sabbatical year, and released all the slaves (Jer. xxxiv. 8-10; cf. Dt. xv. 12-15). Shortly after this, Hophra having mustered his promised army in Egypt, the Babylonian army raised the siege and marched to the south to meet the new enemy (Jer. xxxvii. 5). Jerusalem was greatly relieved and, no doubt, believed that Yahweh had interfered because of their good works. But religion that is the result of necessity is sometimes short-lived. The slaves seemed an economic necessity, and as soon as the danger seemed past they were pressed back into their old service (Jer. xxxiv. 11-16). Jeremiah was indignant, and predicted immediate ruin (Jer. xxxiv. 1-5, 17-22; xxxvii. 1-10). The Egyptian army



was put to flight, and again the Babylonian encamped before the rebellious city. After a few months of siege, in which the suffering was extreme (cf. Lam. ii. iv.), the city walls were breached, the king was captured in an effort to escape, the city was looted, and the temple and palaces were burnt to the ground (II Kgs. xxv. 1-12).

The king and his chief advisors were carried to the army headquarters at Riblah where the advisors were slain, the king's sons were mercilessly put to death before the face of the father, then his eyes were gouged out, and he, a warning to all rebels, was carried to Babylon (II Kgs. xxv. 6, 7, 18-21). The residue of the city people were carried away, and only the poorest of the land were left as vine dressers and husbandmen. Thus with the fall of Jerusalem, August 586 B.C., the date of the second captivity, passed away the little kingdom of Judah and the house of David as a ruling dynasty.

Jeremiah had understood the trend of events, and the blind, who had refused his leadership, had indeed fallen into the ditch. From 604 B.C. on, he had stood by his convictions, that Nebuchadrezzar was the servant of Yahweh, and that submission was the only way to national safety. To the king and the people, this was the way of life (Jer. xxi. 1-14; xxxiv. 1-7). Such council was, no doubt, a source of worry to the defenders of the city, and the prophet was looked on as a traitor. His denunciation of the treachery of those leaders, who pressed back their slaves into servitude, won for him the enmity of those with whose economic interests he had interfered. So when at this time he attempted to go to Anathoth to complete a deal for some ancestral lands, he was accused of being a deserter, taken prisoner, and cast into prison (Jer. xxxvii. 1-21). Thence he was flung into a filthy pit from which he was rescued by a colored slave (Jer. xxxviii.

7-13). Visited a number of times by the king, and also by the princes, he always insisted that capitulation was the only door of hope, but to no avail (Jer. xxxviii. 14-28).

When the city fell, the old man who had seen the end so clearly and had suffered so continuously because he would not withhold his voice, was treated with rare confidence by the conquering army (Jer. xxxix. 11-14; xl. 1-4). He in turn, having the privilege of going to Babylon as an honored captive, or remaining in the broken city, chose the harder way, and cast in his lot with those with whom, and for whom, he had suffered, and continued to the end the life of service and sacrifice.

Only one event in national history at this juncture remains to be mentioned. Gedaliah was put in charge of the desolated province, and, owing to the wreckage of Jerusalem, had to remove headquarters to Mizpah (II Kgs. xxv. 22-26; Jer. xl. 7—xliii. 13). Two months after the beginning of his régime he, along with certain of the Babylonian soldiers who were left with him, was slain by Ishmael, a prince of royal blood, who was supported in his insurrection by Baalis, king of Ammon. A few of the remaining nobles, fearing the Babylonian vengeance, hastily fled to Taphanes in Egypt, bearing with them Jeremiah, though against his council. Report tells us he continued his preaching here, and was finally martyred by a people who could no longer tolerate his rebukes. A third deportation, a small one, was made in 581 B.C., perhaps as the result of Ishmael's folly.

### C—RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

The necessity of the complete destruction of Jerusalem was realized very early by some of the prophets. Jeremiah had long understood that the day of grace

had been sinned away, and hence the intercession of no group of saints would save the city (Jer. xv. 1-4). Ezekiel from a far land in 591 B.C., viewing the horrible temple ritual, also knew that the end had come (Ezk. viii. 1-18). But when these prophets, lovers of Yahweh and lovers of their people, viewed the devastated land, the city breached and wrecked, temple and palaces burned, and the people torn from their homes, hiding in the rocks and the fastnesses of Judah or over in Moab and Gilead, or fleeing to Egypt for a precarious protection, or dragged away at the chariot wheels of the captor to Babylonia, all as sheep without a shepherd, then a new and serious problem had to be faced. Would the religion of Yahweh be perpetuated? Would Israel survive as a people? Where was there any hope, any comfort for these distraught, repentant people?

In part these leaders had history on which to build. There was the ancient covenant between Yahweh and Israel. Hosea had proclaimed punishment, but also a wooing love that would follow a disloyal people to the end, would heal their backslidings, and would love them freely (Hos. xiv. 1-8). Isaiah from the beginning of his ministry had, in the person of his son, declared, "a remnant shall return." In the hour of most apparent disaster his faith in the ultimate outcome of the kingdom of God seemed to never waver. In similar difficulties Habakkuk had struck deeper than any of the others when he proclaimed a kingdom of character. Ezekiel in his blackest hour, when he knew all must perish, cried out in agony, "O, Yahweh, wilt thou make an end of the remnant of Israel" (Ezk. xi. 13). Then was sounded a note, the beginning of a chorus, which in increasing volume through the decades proclaimed to the distressed and sorrowing the certainty of return to the home land and the favor of their God.

Ezekiel's first definite note follows hard on his cry of consternation. It is, "I will gather them from the peoples and assemble them from the countries where they have been scattered, and I will give them the land of Israel . . . and I will give them another heart, and I will put a new spirit into them . . ." (Ezk. xi. 13-21).

In the following year there is again the assurance that Yahweh will bring them out of the countries where they have been scattered, and will bring them to his "holy mountain" "for my name's sake" (Ezk. xx. 39-44).

Jeremiah was in the very midst of the national wreckage. But his faith in God forbade him accepting the desolation as final. He was convinced that the land would again be inhabited, and when his uncle in Anathoth grew panicky, owing to the rapid depreciation of land values, he availed himself of his privilege as kinsman, purchased the estate for about \$175.00, and buried the signed and sealed deed in a corner of the lot as an evidence of his optimism (Jer. xxxii. 6-15). He was confident the Babylonian régime would end in a couple of generations, and that Judah would return, and that houses and fields and vineyards would yet be bought and cultivated.

Important as the hope of the national return was, the prophets were even more deeply interested in a more vital problem, *viz.*, the first principle of true religion. With the collapse of the city, the nation could no longer be treated as a unit as previously had been done. Now all were individuals scattered abroad, each moving for himself. It is true they blamed the fathers for their plight, and quoted the old adage, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth have been set on edge" (Jer. xxxi. 29; Ezk. xviii. 2), but the prophets had arrived at the conception of individual responsibility. Jeremiah is

very concise in his statement, "every one shall die for his own iniquity" (Jer. xxxi. 30). Ezekiel, his contemporary, influenced by the same disaster, went much further in his expression of individualism. With some of the gifts of a theologian, he pushed his convictions to their logical conclusion. Perhaps not earlier than 586 B.C. did he formulate what is known as the dogma of individualism (Ezk. xviii. 1-32; xxxiii. 1-20). Surrounded by those who thought only in terms of national life or solidarity, he exaggerated the independence of the individual in order to drive home his point. He compassed all the cases at issue. If a man be just . . . he shall surely live. If this just man has a son who does wickedness, his father's righteousness is of no avail, his blood shall be on his own head. If this wicked son has a son who is just . . . his father's sin shall not be visited on him . . . he shall live. Then the prophet goes further. If the wicked man repent, he shall live. If the just man sin, he shall die. Not only is a man not blessed or cursed because of his ancestry, but a man will not be punished or rewarded because of his yesterdays. This was an appeal to an audience whose whole thinking had prejudiced them against the idea of individual responsibility. It disregarded the law of heredity and the unity of life, but the new truth was made to stand out in bold relief so that it could be understood and appreciated.

If individualism was made clear to these two great leaders through the national catastrophe, the corollary, that religion is an inner, personal experience, also came to expression. No man was better equipped than Jeremiah to blaze the trail with this epoch making conception. He was the most spiritual of the prophets. He had had a personal religious experience of a most vital type (cf. Jer. i. 9; compare with Isa. vi. 6, 7). In early days he contended that circumcision should be of the heart (Jer. iv. 4). Later he



learned that ritual reform, pledged in a great public convention with high enthusiasm, and carried out with gratifying thoroughness by interested officials, healed the wound of the people too lightly. He, who in the beginning had pled with the nation to return, and to "ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer. vi. 16), was taught by the hard facts of experience that national covenants would never save a nation. Yet his confidence in Yahweh and the future never wavered. What then does Yahweh demand, and how may his favor be attained, this was his life question. An answer came apparently towards the end of his days.

That answer, the new covenant, was the crowning glory of the messages of a prophet who, perhaps more than any predecessor, experienced the fellowship of which he sings.

"Behold the days come, saith Yahweh, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah . . . This is the covenant that I will make . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; I will be their God, and they will be my people . . . All shall know me" (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). That this amazingly vital ideal was frequently interpreted and enlarged, and that some of those interpretations found their way into our present text, is made evident by a comparison of the Hebrew with the Septuagint text. But we cannot doubt that Jeremiah was the herald of this ideal (cf. Ezk. xxxvi. 26-27).

But other men of faith, unknown indeed by name, but spokesmen for truth, lived and diligently wrought amid the din and uproar of the falling civilization. These were years of feverish activity for the Deuteronomic school. If the book of the law consisted only of Deuteronomy xii.-xix., xxviii., it must before the

end of this period have been enlarged to its present size (cf. p. 198). Deuteronomy xix. 14—xxv. is a collection of miscellaneous laws, not definitely related to the law of central sanctuary, to the Covenant Code, or to one another. They read like odds and ends, gathered from the customs of the people by a diligent scribe. Chapters i.—xi. contain two introductions. The first, i.—iv. 40, has a Mosaic discourse in the language of D., based on material found in Exodus and Numbers. The second, Deuteronomy v.—xi., which indeed may have been part of the original book, has exhortations from Moses, touching the unity of Yahweh, which is thoroughly Deuteronomic.

To the same group of men, or to a man of the same spirit, we owe the second edition of our present book of Kings. The five sources that he had at command and his method of work have already been explained (cf. pp. 120—125). His philosophy of history was, that since the temple sanctuary was the only legitimate place of worship, hence the existence of the high places was the cause of the fall of the north, and was the chief sin of the south. The kings were guilty in so far as they had not taken away the high places. The narratives that most conclusively proved this thesis were selected, and these ideals were impressed on his readers by every possible illustration.

Religious poems and individual proverbs were no doubt called forth by the varied experiences of the last century. The deliverance from Sennacherib, the prestige gained by the temple, the revolution under Manasseh with the severe suffering of the worshipers of Yahweh, the reform of Josiah, and the turbulence of the closing decades of the history of Judah, each and all, awoke the religious emotions and demanded manifold expression. As previously indicated, however, it would not be the task of wisdom to draw the

lines absolutely as to what psalms and what proverbs did and what did not originate in this period.

Those psalms that have the king or the kingship as the central theme, or speak of him as though he were existing, were most likely written in the pre-exilic days. Among such poems are Psalms xviii., lxi., lxiii., lxxii., xlv., xlvii., xlviii. and xlv. If these did come from the time before the fall of the kingdom, we are able to see in each one of them evidences of reworking, in order to suit the thoughts and ideals of later generations of worshipers.

The "wise men" had certainly food for thought in the midst of the crises of the century. The maker of proverbs is always with us. Life, grave and gay alike, gives him the opportunity, if he be so minded, to wing his salted speech or stinging phrase down to posterity. Yet it is a futile task to determine the origin of that which because it is common sense may have originated in many different centers at many different times. It is to this period, however, that we must go for the beginning of Hebrew speculation (cf. Hab. i., ii. and Jer. xii. 1). Later centuries were required to carry it to its completion.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE PERIOD OF THE EXILE, 586-539 B.C.

EZEKIEL; LEVITICUS XVII.-XXVI.; LAMENTATIONS;  
ISAIAH XIII.-XIV., XXI., XL.-LV.; JEREMIAH I.  
2—LI. 58.

#### A—EARLY YEARS OF THE EXILE

THREE groups of Israelites interest us in this period. Those who were left in Palestine were by far the most numerous. We have already seen the condition of these people during the twenty years preceding the second captivity, when all was riot and confusion. Those who were deported in 586 B.C., numbering perhaps as many or more than the first captivity, would again naturally be from the best of the people. After the murder of Gedaliah, a group fled to the kindly land of Pharaoh, and later, in 581 B.C., a further deportation from the Palestinian remnant was taken to Babylon (Jer. lii. 30). Desolation surely reigned throughout the land. The most savage words of the prophets scarcely did justice to the situation (Ezk. v. 5—vi. 7; Jer. xxiv. 8-10). Jerusalem was uninhabitable. The towns were deserted. Before the continued ravages of war people had fled in small groups to the most inaccessible fastnesses of the hills or to the deserts of the south and east. The responsible people, those with wealth or culture, had mostly been removed, and







nothing but the dregs of society were left. Judah suffered more than Israel ever had. Only slowly could her scattered groups return and set to work rebuilding here and there the ruins of home and city.

*Immigrations*—But in this difficult undertaking they were not left quietly to themselves. Desert peoples had always looked longingly towards Judea and Samaria. Not for six centuries had the opportunity for them been so favorable as now. The Ammonite, the Moabite, and the Arabian were not slow to make inroads into the "land flowing with milk and honey." The spoils of war, as well as the wasted vineyards, must have appealed to them. But of all these immigrants the Edomite was the most insistent. The Nabatæans from the south were driving them out of their ancient mountains, and thus they were forced northward. Gradually they encroached on the territory of Judah until in the fourth century they held Hebron and all the south. Here indeed was a medley, and so far as religion or culture was concerned, little could be expected from it. Ezekiel reports the iniquities that were common in the country about 586 B.C. Idolatry and immorality of the worst types prevailed among those religious leaders who boasted in their newly acquired inheritance (Ezk. xxxiii. 23-29). In the course of the subsequent years the conditions must have grown worse, if possible, than when these judgments were uttered (cf. Jer. xxiv. 1-4). The desolation, when in 520 B.C. Haggai and Zechariah began their work, seems to have been complete.

*Conditions in Egypt*—From Palestine we turn to Egypt, where perhaps the next largest group of Jews was to be found. From the time of Abraham on, the land of the Nile had always offered to the dweller in Palestine a haven from famine and from foe. During the whole history of Judah there seems to have been a pro-Egyptian party at court. Solomon had affilia-

tions with Egypt. Hosea likened Israel to a silly dove calling to Egypt, and Egyptian intrigues were the chief bane of Judah during the days of Isaiah. From the death of Josiah till the fall of the city there was always a prominent group of Egyptian sympathizers. Because of proximity and possible personal advantage Israelites must have frequently crossed the borders, and many must have become more or less at home in the land of the Pharaohs.

Two such groups are of interest to us. The first is that which carried Jeremiah with them, and settled at Taphanes, Migdol, Memphis, and Pathros (Jer. xlv. 1-3). Taphanes, lying on the caravan route near the edge of the desert, had been recently built and was an important business center. Excavations show that at first it was occupied chiefly by foreigners. Memphis was the capital of Lower Egypt, and Pathros was a general term for Upper Egypt. In these places the Jews were surrounded by wealth, and as they availed themselves of the commercial opportunities of the country many of them became prosperous. But the prophets were not deluded by the possible prosperity. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were convinced that Egypt would fall before Nebuchadrezzar. Ezekiel in 587 B.C., perhaps for the encouragement of some of the Jews in Egypt, predicted that the land from Migdol would be so completely desolated that her cities shall lie waste for forty years, and though later the Egyptian kingdom shall be restored it will be confined to Upper Egypt (Ezk. xxix. 1-16). Lower Egypt, according to the latest paragraph of the book, 570 B.C., was to be the reward given to Nebuchadrezzar for his services against Tyre (Ezk. xxix. 17-21).

Jeremiah, indignant that against his advice his kinsfolk fled to Egypt and carried him with them, at once by symbol and speech declared the certainty of the fall of the empire at the hand of Nebuchadrezzar (Jer.

xlili. 8-13). Later, apparently at an assembly, he rebuked his people for burning incense to the queen of heaven, and predicted a coming ruin. They, influenced chiefly by the women, indignantly refused to cease the prevalent worship, and appealed to history in support of their actions. They drew attention to the fact that since the time of the reform, apparently that of 621 B.C., when they had left off burning incense to the queen of heaven, they had been consumed by the sword and by famine. Jeremiah retorted that they were stubborn, and that such disaster would come on them that few would return to Judah (Jer. xliv. 1-28).

History does not reveal the destiny of these colonies. In 564 B.C. Amasis of Egypt withdrew all trading privileges from foreigners, and we can only surmise that these Jewish settlements scattered, some back to their own home land, others perhaps to Upper Egypt.

*Colony in Assuan*—Greater interest, however, is centered in a second colony, of which until quite recently nothing was known. With the discovery of the Assuan papyri in 1904, it was found that on the island of Elephantine there had long existed a considerable Jewish settlement. One letter written from Elephantine in November, 408 B.C., to Baghoi, a Persian officer in Judah, contains important information. It is an appeal directed to the Jerusalem Jews for assistance in the rebuilding of the Jewish temple, which had recently been destroyed by a mob incited by jealous Egyptian priests. This temple had been a splendid structure, and frankincense and cereal and burnt offerings had there been made to Yahu (cf. Yahweh) the "God of Heaven." It had been in existence when Cambyzes had in 525 B.C. conquered Egypt, and had been spared when he laid so many Egyptian temples in ruins. How much earlier than this it had been built, we do not know. It would seem, however, that the idea of a central sanctuary as the only legiti-

mate place of worship, which was the central feature of the reform of 621 B.C., was not deeply rooted in the religious consciousness of these people. They may have left Judah before the days of the great reform, and there is every reason to suspect that during the bloody reign of Manasseh many refugees made their way to the hospitable valley of the Nile. Such would know no reason why in a foreign land they should not build a temple for the worship of Yahu, their God. If this be correct, we can understand how from time to time such privileges would attract their kinsmen, so that ultimately they attained some degree of international importance. Their later history, like their earlier, is unwritten.

But their existence throws a light on a number of facts. The Biblical "Seveneh" is quite evidently the Egyptian *sw n*, modern Assuan or Syene, which many of the old translators understood to mean China (Ezk. xxix. 10; xxx. 6). More important still, it is possible that the Jewish name for deity, which our translators rendered incorrectly by Jehovah, and our modern scholars insist on pronouncing Yahweh, may be preserved most accurately in these fifth century B.C. documents. They are further evidence of the wide extent of the early Jewish dispersion. But this group so far as we know made no direct contribution to the literature or the religion of Judaism.

*Colony in Babylonia*—The scene of our study now shifts to the Tigris-Euphrates valley, a thousand miles east of Palestine. Here lived the third group of Jews, the smallest of all, but unquestionably the most influential.

Here in 586 B.C. was the first military world-power of the day, yet the constructive policy of its king was its chief glory. Agriculture was developed by a well-organized system of irrigation, and throughout the country there was amazing productivity. Commerce



was encouraged by a vast system of water-ways and by a peace policy. Important defense works were erected in strategic parts of the country. Building operations surpassed those of any previous era in their history. More than forty great temples were put in order and beautified by the king. But the city of Babylon was the apple of his eye. It enjoyed an unwonted splendor. Fortifications made it apparently impregnable. Herodotus tells us that the eastern wall was three hundred and seventy-five feet high, and ninety feet wide on the top. Citadels and guard chambers, bronze gates and impassable moats, provided for the safety of the city. Boulevards adorned with the rarest beauty from forest and plain, palaces glorious in bronze and gold, resplendent with costly woods and marbles from far distant mountains, the hanging gardens which outshone the grandeur of the Median mountains, and beyond all, the great temple of Marduk, on which the devout king had lavishly poured the treasure of his kingdom, made it not only the greatest commercial center of the world, but the most unique and beautiful city of history.

To the kingdom, of which this city was the center, the captives of the two deportations, perhaps some fifty thousand in all, were carried as the spoils of war. The geographical distance from their old home was perhaps the least significant change of all. The exiles could not fail to compare Jerusalem, the city of David, with the city of Nebuchadrezzar, or the rocky, isolated waste of Judea with the fertile plains watered by the Tigris and Euphrates. The temple of Marduk, glorious to the eye, lavish in ritual, cared for by an innumerable and well-organized priesthood, rose before their weary eyes an overwhelming contrast to the revered but desolated temple in the homeland. Alongside of the outward culture of the conqueror the civilization of Palestine was very rustic indeed. Such

vivid contrasts must have deeply impressed the minds of the bewildered captives.

These Jews were scattered in various parts of the state, in small colonies, where they were engaged in profitable agricultural and commercial pursuits (Ezk. iii. 15, 23; x. 22; Jer. xxix. 1-14). They had the privilege of private ownership of land and houses. They seem to have been responsible for their local government, and their religious life was a matter of their own concern. This new world impressed itself on them all. They were the disciples of the Deuteronomic reform, and hence no sacrifice was valid outside of Jerusalem. Because of the distance from the city which the Lord their God had chosen, some, indeed most, of the religious rites of their ancestors they were unable to observe. Sacrifices and the feasts were impossible. Hence, the observation of the sabbath, circumcision, fasting, and prayer, such functions as they could observe anywhere, were likely to receive stricter attention than hitherto. When they emerge from the exile we find the first two, sabbath observance and circumcision, have an emphasis previously unknown, and are the *sine qua non* of the true Jew (Neh. xiii. 15-22; cf. Ezk. xx. 12-21; xxii. 26). Unable to gather in the temple, they were not prevented from meeting in small groups in private houses for religious encouragement (Ezk. viii. 1; xiv. 1; xx. 1). The beginnings of that which was later organized under the name of synagogue may be found here.

The active influences of the environment could not altogether be escaped. Many learned the business methods of their masters, and in the lure of their new found prosperity quite forgot the claims of their country and their religion. Many may have deemed the religion of Marduk, the God of the conquerors more worth while than that of Yahweh, and thus losing their religious identity, easily became absorbed into

the Babylonian civilization. Some may have lived out their days in the midst of this new culture without in any way adopting the customs or reflecting the religious ideals of their neighbors. But there were still others, and this is always an important group, who refused either to close their eyes to the virtues in the new environment, or to be overwhelmed by advantages that were only material.

*Ezekiel*—Ezekiel's is the one name of this last group, of whose work and ideal we are most certain. He was a young priest, in good circumstances, who in 597 B.C. was carried away and settled by the canal Khebar (cf. p. 206). For five years he was silent, but we are sure he was not indolent. Was he drinking in the wonders of the new culture? Did he make occasional visits to Babylon, the near-by city, that he might view the boulevards and the hanging gardens? Did he study the activities of the priests, or become familiar with the ancient ritual and law of his masters? Did he become acquainted with the histories, the hymnody, and the creation stories of his captors, or was he devoting his time to the literature of his own people? Was the problem of the fall of Judah and the possibility of return perplexing him? We can well believe that these were years of careful thought in which all the material at hand made its contribution to his final outlook. Of this we are convinced when we read the first chapter of his book. — Here in strange weird symbolism, in 592 B.C., the prophet presents the conclusion he has reached, *viz.*, that Yahweh was greater than all the Gods of Babylon (Ezk. i. 1-28). The bull figures, called cherubim, each with four heads, were the composite symbols of Babylonian divinities that were seen in front of all the palaces and temples of the land. But Yahweh is sitting up over them, and it is he who with all seeing eye sees, and with swiftly moving chariot visits all

parts of the country. How wide a gulf separated Ezekiel from those kinsmen of his who, captivated by the commercial glamor of the day, forgot the religious heritage of Israel.

From 592 to 586 B.C. he was occupied chiefly with predictions of coming ruin on Jerusalem (Ezk. i.-xxiv.). The ethical message of previous prophets he had not forgotten (Ezk. vii., xxii. 6-12), but as a priest he was most interested in ritual regulations. In this he conceived the nation to have grievously sinned. Her ancestry had been Amorite and Hittite, and from the beginning she had been pagan, and had loved idolatry (Ezk. xvi. 1-5). She had eaten on the mountains, thereby violating the ideal of the reformation, and in the temple she had accumulated the most abominable religious forms imaginable (Ezk. viii.-xi.). For sixteen years he rang the changes of coming doom because of Israel's unholy rites and life. He declared Yahweh had left the temple and the city because of her iniquity. By startling symbol he proclaimed siege and sword, fire and pestilence as the only end of the nation. Swiftly the fated day approached. The Babylonian army closed in on the stricken city and patiently waited. Grimly the besieged held out, but after a year and a half of suffering they capitulated to their foes. The actual fall of the city came to Ezekiel as a great shock. So overwhelmed was he that he failed to observe the usual mourning customs over his wife, who had died the previous day (Ezk. xxiv. 15-18). For all the exiles it was a sad day. Relatives in Jerusalem had suffered. The temple and the city were no more. National hope now seemed to have nothing left to cling to, and the faith of many must have been shattered.

Our prophet helped to save the situation. He had predicted ruin, but he had also told the reason why. History had vindicated his words and accredited him

to the exiles. He had also paved the way for a new beginning. As a priest he was naturally an individualist. Conscious that the state was tumbling, he, like Jeremiah, saw that each man stood by himself (p. 213-214). When he viewed the doomed city he inquired if the righteous were going to suffer with the guilty, and was assured that they would be spared (ix. 3-8). Noah, Daniel, and Job could deliver but their own souls by their righteousness (xiv. 12-23). This conviction he finally announced in the phrase, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and this idea he wrought out to the last logical detail in the doctrine of individualism (Ezk. xviii. 1-28; xxxiii. 10-20). Hope was held out on a new basis, *viz.*, that of the renewed heart in the individual, "I will give you a new heart, and will put a new spirit within you . . . and ye shall keep my statutes to do them" (Ezk. xxxvi. 26-27). Hence, a remnant of the faithful will be gathered back, and Yahweh himself unable to trust his flock to the care of shepherds, will be their shepherd, and "for his own sake" will deliver them from those who prey on them (Ezk. xxxiv. 11-31). The whole nation, scattered, unorganized, and apparently lifeless, will be marvelously resurrected and brought back to Palestine, where they will be the people of God, and will serve him forevermore (xxxvi. 1-xxxvii.). Later the hostile nations from afar, whosoever they may be, who might in the future molest her as had Assyria, Egypt, and Babylonia in the past, all shall be overthrown in a final world catastrophe, through earthquake, sword, and pestilence (xxxviii.-xxxix.). The weapons of the overthrown armies will suffice for seven years fuel for Israel, the carrion birds will flock from all quarters and glut themselves on the putrid flesh of Yahweh's sacrifice, and seven months will be required for the burial of the dead bodies. Thus will the captivity of Jacob be restored, and they



shall all know that Yahweh sent them into captivity, that he gathered them to their own land, and that he will not hide his face any more from them.

Chapters xxv.-xxxii. and xxxv. contain attacks on nations bordering on Judah. It may be that when the immediate fall of Jerusalem was certain, the prophet turned his attention to the old-time enemies. The punishment, described in each case with considerable detail, is thoroughgoing, and in general is due to the attitude of the respective nation towards Jerusalem and the temple. Edom, the most contemptuous enemy, receives the severest censure of all, while Babylon for obvious reasons is never mentioned.

It was fourteen years later, towards the close of his life, that Ezekiel wrote his temple vision (Ezk. xl.-xlviii.). This was his most important contribution to the thought and the life of his people. In this he prescribed the conditions under which a people might themselves remain holy, and serve a holy God acceptably, and thus permanently occupy a holy land. Years before, Ezekiel had seen Yahweh leave the temple because of ritual uncleanness. How could the sanctuary be so purified and protected that it would be suitable for the abode of the holy God, was his problem. The temple vision, dated 572 B.C., which contains his matured conception of true religion, is his answer (Ezk. xl.-xlviii.). Religious life must be conserved by rule and regulation is his prescription for national salvation, and is the foundation of his hope for Israel. The scheme is well ordered. All the tribes are to be gathered into an organization that is essentially ecclesiastical. The "sacred estate" is an era about seven and one half miles square, which is to be situated about the center of Palestine, some miles north of the actual city of Jerusalem. Seven tribes are to lie on the north and the remaining five on the south of this estate. To the east and the west of it is to lie the

property of the prince. This "sacred estate" is to be divided into three equal parts lying side by side from east to west. The northern one-third is to be the property of the Levites. Directly south of this is the one-third which is to be the possession of the priests, the Zadokites, and in the center of this is to lie the temple. South of this again, lies the one-third in which is to be the city, about one and one-third miles square, with a boulevard two hundred and sixty-four yards wide, running completely around it. On each side of the city, east and west, lies a square about three by two and one-third miles for community tillage. The temple, which is to lie in the very center of the "sacred estate," is to be built on a very high mountain, and the altar is to be approached by three terraces. Walls surround the whole enclosure, and the entrances are carefully guarded by officers. Nothing unclean may enter the holy place. The last verse of the book discloses the ideal in this most carefully guarded holy of holies. "Yahweh is there."

Some important developments in the ritual are found in this section of the book. The priesthood is now separated into two classes, *viz.*, the priests, the sons of Zadok, and the Levites (Ezk. xlv. 10-27; xliii. 19; xlii. 13). In Deuteronomy all were the priests, the Levites. Two courts now enclose the sanctuary instead of one as heretofore. Two hitherto unknown types of offering, the guilt and the sin offering, are now added (Ezk. xlv. 29; xlv. 21-25). The temple now must be completely separated from all secular personages and from all secular buildings, which is a radical departure from the past. The prince is now to be a mere appendage to the priesthood with no function in the state. His palace and his private cemetery, as well as all his property, cannot come within at least four miles of the temple (xliii. 7-9; xlv. 7, 8). Quite contrary to all early history, as well as to the require-

ments of Deuteronomy, no foreigner who is among the children of Israel may have entrance to the temple (xliv. 7-9).

While it is easy to see how this was an interpretation of earlier regulations by one who was familiar with the priestly ritual of both Israel and Babylon, we do not wonder that the Rabbis were long in doubt as to its right to a place in the canon. Their theory of Mosaic authorship of the law left no room for such a code. It occupies an intermediate place in the Old Testament ritual. It grew out of the earlier, and was the stepping stone to the later. Ezekiel was of the "apostolic succession" of the priesthood. Most of his distinctive features influenced the succeeding centuries of Judaism. From now on ritual is given a very important place even by the prophets.

The last word from Ezekiel is in part an apology. In 586 B.C., when Nebuchadrezzar was besieging Tyre, with great detail he predicted that "he shall enter into thy gates, his horses shall tread down all thy streets . . . he shall break down thy walls, they shall lay thy stones and thy timbers and thy dust in the midst of the water . . . thou shalt be built no more (Ezk. xxvi. 7-14). But history declares that after a thirteen year siege the Babylonian army, unable to reduce the obstinate city, gave up the attempt. Ezekiel, aware of this, in 570 B.C., three years after the withdrawal of the army, candidly acknowledged the failure of the letter of his prediction, but is quite undisturbed, because the general principle of punishment of evil has been in operation (Ezk. xxix. 17-20).

*Holiness Code*—A kindred spirit to Ezekiel perhaps a few years later gathered together and interpreted in harmony with the general conception of his contemporary some of the ritual and social customs of the past. Leviticus xvii.-xxvi., which owing to the introduction and the hortatory conclusion, may justly be

called a code, was practically completed by at least the close of the exile.<sup>1</sup>

Owing to its general tone these chapters are now designated as "Holiness Code." A careful study, which shows a lack of order (cf. xviii. and xx., which treat the same general topic, are separated by xix., which deals with entirely different laws; and xxiv., which is unrelated either to what precedes or follows), and reveals duplicate laws (cf. xix. 3 with xix. 30 and xxvi. 2; xix. 26 with xvii. 10-14; xix. 4 with xxvi. 1 and xxiii. 22 with xix. 9), makes it evident that this code was not the work of a single mind or the product of a single century as was Ezekiel xl.-xlviii. It is apparently a compilation of excerpts from two or more earlier codes.

It demands that all sacrifice and the slaughter of all animals should be before Yahweh (Lv. xvii.); that the priests and all the offerings should be carefully guarded from defilement (Lv. xxi.-xxii.); that a sacred calendar, which shows traces of early agricultural conditions, should be observed (Lv. xxiii., xxv.); and that laws regulating certain sex and social conditions should be executed (Lv. xviii.-xx. xxiv.). Many of the laws hark back to early conditions, and parallels are found both in C.C. and D. In its present form it assumes the central sanctuary of D. (Lv. xvii. 3, 4, 9), and is marked by much the same social spirit. Stealing, lying, false swearing, holding back wages, and giving false judgment are all condemned (Lv. xix. 11-18). In fact, chapter xix. contains both tables of the decalogue. The people are enjoined to observe the sabbatical year and the year of jubilee (Lv. xxv.), to deal leniently with the slave (Lv. xix. 33), to oppress

<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted in passing that a number of leading scholars are inclined to place this code earlier than the time of Ezekiel, perhaps as much as half a century. For our purpose the definite date is immaterial.

not the resident alien but to grant him the same privilege as the home-born in the civil court and before the altar (Lv. xvii. 8, 10, 13; xxiv. 22). In fullest accord with D. they are to love him as themselves (Lv. xix. 34).

While in some particulars, as the attitude towards the foreigner, it differs from that of Ezekiel, on the whole there is a marked agreement. Attacks were made on the same social vices which were encouraged by much of the religion of the day, and the holiness of Yahweh was guarded by measures similar to those in Ezekiel. It is ritualistic in its outlook. The keeping of ancient taboos is on the same level as the observance of the moral law (Lv. xix. 11-18 cf. xix. 19-20 and xix. 29-30). Hence the ethical demands of the eighth-century prophets are now to be observed because, "I am Yahweh your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt" (Lv. xix. 10, 12, 14, 16, 36). The code closes as do the earlier ones with both promise and threat (Lv. xxvi. 3-13, 14-33). The chastisement suggested in the closing paragraph is as definite as an historian could summarize the actual history of Judah, and the closing words of the code hold out the assurance of return to their own land when they become humble and accept the due punishment for their sins. Then will Yahweh remember his covenant with the fathers and will not utterly abhor them in the land of their enemies. This code has a rare combination of the prophetic and the priestly, the ethical and the ritual, drawn together by some zealous reformer.

It is quite probable that other similar laws, of which Leviticus xi. 43-45 and Numbers xv. 37-41 may serve as an illustration, were collected and written down in this period. It was the early work of a school that through the following two centuries adjusted ancient religious customs to meet the spiritual needs of their



age, and thus helped to conserve the best and the holiest of the past. Later we shall find the full ripe fruitage of which Ezekiel's vision and Holiness Code were but the promise.

*Deuteronomic Activity*—The opportunities of the exile called others than the priestly caste to the literary task. The historians of the Deuteronomic school were still busily at work (cf. pp. 215-216). Already the earlier history from the time of David back through the judges and the patriarchs to the beginning existed as a connected story in written form. The religious interpretation of this history was now essayed. Thus was the JE. roll definitely linked up with Deuteronomy. A large contribution was made to the present first twelve chapters of Joshua, giving the JE. story of the early conquest of Canaan a new and more religious interpretation (*e.g.*, Josh. i. 3-9; iv. 21-24; v. 4-7; viii. 1-12; xi. 10-xii. 24). The already ancient story book of the Judges was reworked so that the story of each judge was fitted into a framework (cf. Jgs. iii. 12-15; iv. 1-3; v. 31; vi. 1, 7-10, etc.), and the ancient heroes became the preachers of the doctrine of loyalty to Yahweh. The books of Samuel which had been compiled some time before this bear very slight trace of the Deuteronomic ideal. Probably I Samuel ii. 27-36; iii. 11-14; vi. 5; viii. 1-22; x. 17-24; xii. 1-25; xiv. 47-51; II Samuel viii. 1-6; xii. 7, 8, 10-12, show the most decided features of this school. Thus with Kings completed they preserved to posterity a mass of the most important historical material, but more important still, they wrought the whole field of their ancient history into a vivid, inspiring, religious message.

*Lamentations*—Poets, whose songs could not be restrained, were also in the land. The terrors of the siege in 586 B.C. and the national catastrophe left an indelible impress on the minds of many. The book of Lamentations containing five independent poems in

elegiac meter, each of the first four arranged as an elegiac acrostic, depicts the suffering and mourns over the ruined city. We are perhaps indebted to two or more poets for these exquisite literary gems. The Septuagint suggests that Jeremiah was the author, but this is scarcely sustained by their form and content. Poems two and four, written in the same style and likely by the same author, may have come from a sufferer in the siege. They are laments that are unutterably doleful. Because of Zion's sin, Yahweh became her enemy and brought the inhabitants to the last stages of despair. The gold of the sanctuary was dimmed, the stones were hurled down into the street, the princes became emaciated, the women boiled and ate their own babes, all because of the anger of Yahweh. Poems one and five have similarities, and may be slightly later. Zion is desolated, and her people are captive in Egypt and Assyria, but Yahweh is righteous. Poem three, the most artificial of all, may be still later. It lacks the pathos of the others, as well as the clear historical background. It is an appeal to the afflicted to wait patiently for the salvation of God, who is good to all those who seek him, together with a cry to the Lord to render the full recompense on all the oppressors.

*Psalms*—Songs of a more religious tone were surely not wanting among the faithful. Some of the psalms give unmistakable evidence of exilic influence (cxxxvii., lxxvii., lxxxix., lxxviii., xxii.). Many others may have been composed and sung by the pious worshipers of Yahweh both in and outside of Palestine. The "Song of Moses" (Dt. xxxii. 1-43), which celebrates the justice and loving kindness of Yahweh, and holds out the hope of vengeance on all the adversaries of the nation, was most likely composed before the end of the exile. Its points of contact with the literature of this period in phrase and idea are very

marked. The days of the exodus lie in the dim past, and the wilderness experience is idealized. Canaan has been occupied, enemies have risen up against them, and great has been the suffering, but deliverance is near at hand.

## B—CLOSING YEARS OF THE EXILE

*Cyrus*—The closing years of the exile witnessed one of those amazing international upheavals such as has only rarely occurred in human history. With the death of Nebuchadrezzar, Babylon entered a period of rapid decline. His son was murdered at the end of two years. The murderer ruled four years and left the throne to a son who, after nine months, was slain. Thus Nabonidus, the fourth king after Nebuchadrezzar, a prince of an entirely different family, with the interests of an archæologist rather than those of a soldier, came to the throne in 555 B.C.

A few years previous to this a young prince, Cyrus by name, had been crowned king of the little mountain principality of Anshan. His gifts enabled him to rise rapidly to the very pinnacle of power. The nations were poorly organized and still more poorly officered. He was both warrior and statesman. In 550 B.C. he successfully revolted against Astyages, king of Media, who was his overlord. The following year all Media bowed before him. By 547 B.C. he was king of Persia and had subjugated northern Mesopotamia. In 546 B.C. he marched west to try conclusions with Croesus, king of the Lydians, who had formed a defensive alliance with the Egyptians and the Babylonians. Before aid could come to him Cyrus forced him to give battle and at Sinope defeated him, and then marched to Sardis, the Lydian capital, which he reduced in two months. The same year the Greeks

of the Ægean coast acknowledged his supremacy. In 539 B.C. he approached Babylon. He defeated Belshazzar, son of Nabonidus, the leader of the army at Opis. From thence he marched against the city of Babylon whither the king had fled. Entrance was gained without siege, owing to treachery on the part of priests who were dissatisfied with the king's lack of homage to the old Babylonian gods. Nabonidus was captured, and the Persian rule was established in October, 539 B.C. Contrary to the expectations of the Hebrew prophets, the city and its deities suffered in no way (Isa. xxi. 2-10; xiii. 1-xiv. 23; xlvi. 1, 2; xlvii. 1-15).

Thus, meteor-like, was established a new dynasty which opened up the era of Aryian rule over the western world. For more than two centuries Persian authority held sway in the land in which our studies lie.

Cyrus has given us his own report, which in part is as follows:

"He searched through all lands; he saw him, and he sought the righteous prince, after his own heart, whom he took by the hand. Cyrus, king of Anshan, he called by name; to sovereignty over the world he appointed him. . . . Marduk, the great lord, the guardian of his people, looked with joy on his pious works and his upright heart; he commanded him to go to his city Babylon, and he caused him to take the road to Babylon, going by his side as a friend and companion . . . without skirmish or battle he permitted him to enter Babylon. He spared his city in its calamity. Nabonidus the king who did not reverence him he delivered into his hand." (Cyrus Cylinder.)

His policy was unquestionably one of toleration for race and religion (cf. Ezra i. 1-4).

*Isaiah xiii. 2-xiv. 23*—This commanding military genius and these momentous international convulsions

could not fail to attract the gaze of many devout thinkers among the captivity. His first great victory, when Astyages was delivered into his hands by the Median army, raised great hopes in the hearts of some of the exiles. One of the greatest elegies in the Old Testament expresses most vigorously the confidences that were stimulated by this triumph (Isa. xiii. 2—xiv. 23). Calamities of the most terrible type are here pronounced on Babylon. The multitude from the mountains, the constellations of the heavens, the forces of earthquake and storm shall be arrayed against wicked and arrogant Babylon. The Medes are to accomplish the terrible day of Yahweh on the pride of the Chaldean, and Jacob and Israel shall return to their own land. Nowhere have we a more vivid picture of the pomp and pride of Babylon, the beautiful, nor so elaborate a picture of her certain downfall. The author, like Nahum in his song over Nineveh, delights in the thought that this city with which he was so well acquainted is going down to the deepest sheol, to the uttermost part of the pit. No more weird scene is found anywhere in Scripture than the welcome extended to the fallen king on his entrance to the underworld (xiv. 4-20). The passionate hatred that runs throughout the closing ode speaks of an author who had personally suffered grievously at the hands of the ancient oppressor (xiv. 4b-23).

*Isaiah xxi. 1-10; Jer. l. 2—li. 58*—After Cyrus in 547 B.C. became king of Persia, and thus united the Median and Elamite armies, some poet saw this combination as the whirlwind that was going to devastate Babylon (Isa. xxi. 1-10). In like strain is much that is found in Jeremiah l. 2—li. 58, which fits into the above history. Here, Jerusalem has fallen, the temple has been violated, the people are in captivity, great nations from the north, of whom the Medes are named, are on the march to wreak vengeance on Babylon for her



destruction of Jerusalem. Israel will then be brought back to Carmel and Bashan, and Judah to her own country, while in Zion the work of Yahweh will be declared. The attitude and the style of this are so different from Jeremiah that it can scarcely have come from him (cf. Jer. xxv. 10, 27-29). This lengthy repetitious tirade against the doomed city can scarcely be earlier than 540 B.C., and its literary echoes of other literature suggests an even later date (*e.g.*, Jer. l. 39-40; cf. Isa. xiii. 19-22; Jer. li. 25; cf. Ezk. xxxv. 3).

Alongside of these voices that breathed out vengeance against the enemy were those that uttered consolation for the captives. Cyrus, as the day star on the horizon, stirred a chorus of hope and faith. A marked evidence of this is found in stray notes that are imbedded in the earlier prophets. Nine small books containing the prophetic oracles of almost two centuries were by this time in the possession of the religious leaders. Who kept them or where, we do not know, but somehow during these disastrous days they were preserved. No doubt they were considered the private property of the individual or the group that was fortunate enough to possess one or more of them. To those who were acquainted with them they were precious because of their contents, but by no one were they deemed "canonical." Study naturally accompanied ownership. Interpretation was necessarily a part of study, and reapplication and enlargement belonged to the same process. Two centuries of such activity must have left its impress.

Illuminating illustrations of this fact are frequent. The book of Hosea had in this way been brought up to date. He was a northerner preaching so far as we know only to Israel. But in the present book there are many peculiar asides which are in no way related to the context, and would sound very strange in the ears of Israel. Many phrases are but the application

of Hosea's sermons of 740 B.C., to Judah after 722 B.C. (*e.g.*, Hos. i. 7; iii. 5; iv. 15; v. 5; vi. 11; viii. 14; x. 11). Men such as Baruch had been at work arranging and supplementing with the necessary historical detail the legacies of their masters or friends (*e.g.*, Jer. xxviii., xxix., xxxii.-xxxiv., xxxvii.-xliv. 30; Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix.). Historical superscriptions must have been added from time to time by eager students of the writings (*e.g.*, Amos i. 1; Hos. i. 1; Mic. i. 1; Isa. i. 1).

Furthermore, worth-while contributions by unnamed prophets were carefully preserved and easily became attached to those of well known kindred spirits. Micah iv.-v. and vi.-vii. did not all come from the days of Hezekiah, if internal evidence is of any value. A nucleus from that prophet (Mic. v. 10-14; vi. 9-16; vii. 1-6) may have at a later period attracted to it a number of most important oracles. The third chapter of Habakkuk, which is a Psalm, may have been the result of the same process. Messages of hope may in the days of great hope have been added here and there to relieve the dark outlook of these early preachers of righteousness (*e.g.*, Hos. i. 10-ii. 1; Zeph. ii. 8-11; iii. 8-20). That this process of interpretation continued until even after the canonization of the books, is well known, and we are profoundly grateful to those unnamed men, who so carefully preserved the ancient documents, and at the same time so conscientiously added or inserted the ideals and visions vouchsafed to them for their own generation.

*Isaiah xl.-lv.*—The most important singer of all the exile was the one who most confidently heralded the coming dawn. His message in late centuries became attached to that of Isaiah, and now we perforce must call him Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. xl.-lv.). His language and thought indeed shows some resemblance to that of the earlier prophet, but still greater dissimilarity (cf. pp. 176-177). He lived under the Babylonian

régime. Jerusalem had fallen, and his people were suffering. He was aware that Cyrus was approaching, and was certain that the great city would fall and that her gods would go into captivity (Isa. xlvi. 1, 2; xlvii. 1-15). Isaiah lived when Assyria was the ruling power, this prophet when Babylon was tottering to her fall. Isaiah warns against idols; this man laughs at them, describes how they are made and rates them as nothing (Isa. xl. 18-20; xlv. 9-20). With this book, monotheism reaches its dogmatic climax, "I form light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil, I am Yahweh that doeth all these things" (Isa. xlv. 7).

The message throughout is one of comfort. It is a vigorous appeal to the exiles to prepare for the home-going which will be possible in the immediate future owing to the conquest of Cyrus. It has, however, a still deeper note. The book in its present form contains four songs, called appropriately the "Servant Songs" (Isa. xlii. 1-4; xlix. 1-6; l. 4-9; lii. 13-liii. 12). These are in poetic form and are not closely knit to their present contexts. In common with the rest of the book they think of Israel or Jacob as the "Servant," but their common theme separates them from it.

The explanation of the captivity is the question they seek to solve. This was a fertile theme for many of the thinkers of the nation. Preceding prophets had no hesitancy in declaring that it was coming owing to the sins of the leaders, but when the flower of the land was actually taken captive in 597 B.C. and again in 586 B.C., and the poor of the land gained the vacant offices and properties, it was soon found that national morals were in no way improved. The sins of those left were as great as of those deported. It was later realized that the conquerors were more wicked than either. Under these circumstances many must have ques-

tioned the meaning of this strange providence. When they further found that this harsh experience led some of the captives to a profound repentance and to a more fervent and intelligent devotion to the religion of Yahweh, they had still further food for thought.

The author of these songs has given us one of the most fundamental religious conceptions of the Old Testament. They give a profoundly spiritual explanation of the great suffering of a good people. Israel, or the nucleus of Israel, is conceived of as a missionary to the Gentiles in order to teach them quietly and wisely the moral law (Isa. xlii. 2-4). Their suffering, marred and bruised as they are, is the method Yahweh has used that through their message and their life he might bring the nations to himself. Apart from this, a vicarious sacrifice, this great achievement could not be accomplished. Thus they were consoled that their exile, their suffering, had not been in vain (Isa. lii. 13—liii. 12).

The importance of this was twofold. It presented to the homeless Israelites a worth-while religious task and an acceptable explanation of their Babylonian experience. To become the missionaries of the true God to those sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death might well arouse the energies of all the devout. On the other hand, here was expressed clearly for the first time the eternal principle of vicarious sacrifice. This belief on the part of the leaders of the stricken people must have been the silver lining of an exceedingly dark national cloud. In a much fuller and truer sense than in the exile do we find this principle exemplified in the life and death of our Lord. It is no wonder that in later days the "Suffering Servant" was identified only with the Messiah. But acquaintance with the historical background and the genesis of the ideal adds light and beauty to the conception which is crowned by the sacrifice of the Christ.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE PERSIAN PERIOD, 539-332 B.C.

EZRA-NEHEMIAH; HAGGAI; ZECHARIAH I.-VIII.;  
MALACHI; ISAIAH XXXIV., XXXV., LVI.-LXVI.;  
OBADIAH; RUTH; JONAH; JOB; PSALMS; JOEL.

#### A—THE OPENING DECADES UNDER PERSIAN SUPREMACY, 539-516 B.C.

*Ezra-Nehemiah*—The editor of the books of Kings continued no further than the year 561 B.C. A school of historians that had for half a century been doing yeoman service had accomplished its work, and now passed from the stage of history. For the Persian period, besides the prophetic writers and the singers, we must turn to the ecclesiastical historian for guidance. *Ezra-Nehemiah*, originally one book, is a continuation of *Chronicles*. It was written by a member of the same priestly school, and that not earlier than 300 B.C. Priestly interests controlled him almost wholly in his selection and interpretation of traditions and documents.

We might expect, with a long cultural history behind and fully developed literary processes at command, to have an ample and continuous story of these two centuries. But far from it; the historical fragments both in completeness and in arrangement are as meager and as confused as was the life of the people themselves. During this period there are only two



occasions when well-known historic characters stand before us, and it is only after the greatest pains that the picture can be filled in, even in the most tentative manner.

Like Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah is a compilation of a compilation. The sources and their values are easily distinguished because of style and thought: (A)—The personal memoirs of Nehemiah are historical sources of first quality. They are the "I" sections, *viz.*, Nehemiah i.-vii. 5; xiii. 4-31, preserved almost as they came from the pen of Nehemiah and early records, *viz.*, Nehemiah xi. 3-36; xii. 27-47; xiii. 1-3, which have been freely worked over by the editor. (B)—A second group of material consists of the memoirs of Ezra. Here we find the "I" section, Ezra vii. 27—ix. 15, which, though in the literary style of the chronicler, we may accept as largely indebted to an original document. In addition to this, Ezra i. 1-4; ii. 68-70; vii. 1-10; x. 1-44; Nehemiah vii. 73—viii. 18; ix.-x., have perhaps memoirs of Ezra behind them, but the ideal of the chronicler has been impressed on them. (C)—The third source is the genealogical list, likely taken from the temple archives, and is a priestly compilation (Neh. vii. 6-69; cf. Ezra ii. 1-69; Neh. xii. 1-26). (D)—The fourth element is the Aramaic section, which comes from a source written about 450 B.C. (Ezra iv. 8—vi. 16). While in its present form it is not free from editing, it need not be doubted to be an interpretation of a temple document. (E)—The remainder of the material and some brief interpolations in the above may be based on written or oral sources, but are throughout in the style of the chronicler, and require great care to determine their historical bearing.

The editor had certain good sources with which to work, but unfortunately he had no chronological chart of Persian or even of Jewish history. How could the

reading of a letter of Artaxerxes [the first king of that name ruled from 464 to 424 B.C.] be the cause of stopping the building of the temple till the second year of Darius (522-485 B.C.; cf. Ezra iv. 6)? Ezra iv. 7-23 must be out of place with what precedes and what follows. Amid the confusion, of which this is only a conspicuous example, we must thread our way as best we can, and occasionally we must acknowledge the grave uncertainty of detail and order.

*Prophets and the Monuments*—We are materially aided by the prophets, especially Haggai and Zechariah i.-viii., whose books are definitely dated, and are of indisputable historical value. Persian and Greek records give us the larger international movements into which the life and letters of the Jews often fit most intimately. In the reconstruction of the picture, space often prevents giving reasons for the assigned order of material and events, and knowledge of the difficulties forbids any dogmatism. Yet the need for a connected story urges the fullest and most careful use of all the literature in the effort to unite the broken links in the chain of history.

For the first two decades of the Persian supremacy (539-516 B.C.) we are fortunate in having excellent sources of information. Haggai i.-ii. and Zechariah i.-viii. are contemporary prophetic records. Ezra i.-vi., when freed from later revisions, gives considerable information of undisputed value, while the Persian records for these years are comparatively complete.

The rise of the Persian power was, as we have seen, spectacular. Her armies were the best disciplined and the most heroic in a world of militarism. Her early kings were among the most commanding figures of history. Their policy towards conquered peoples and their gift of organization introduced an epoch into national government. Their religious tolerance was

commendable. Under such conditions the hopes of Israel took on new life and vigor.

When Cyrus conquered Babylon he devoutly acknowledged that Marduk, the king of the Babylonian gods, had called him by name and appointed him to the lordship of the whole land (cf. p. 238). Nothing of further interest to the Jews is known from Persian history during his reign. Cambyses II (529-522 B.C.), his son, succeeded him. He secretly murdered Bardys, his brother, whom he feared, and in 525 B.C. led his army into Egypt. Remaining here for three years, he subdued the whole country. At first his policy, like that of his father, was one of conciliation, but suffering reverses in Upper Egypt, owing to famine, he gave way to his temper, treated Psamtik, the conquered Pharaoh, with great indignity, destroyed many of the temples, and even slew Apis, the sacred bull, with his own hand. Report came to him in 522 B.C., in the midst of his outrages, that Gaumates, a Median, posed as the murdered Bardys, and had seized the Persian throne. On the way back to Persia, in despair at the dilemma he faced, he came to his death, apparently by suicide. Gaumates was slain after a usurpation of seven months, and Darius I (522-486 B.C.), of royal blood, was placed on the throne by the princes.

The new empire seemed now about to crumble to the dust. Darius, in his Behistun inscription, cut in the face of the rock of the Baghistana Mountains and still perfectly preserved, named nine usurpers who assumed authority in various parts of his wide dominion. In nineteen great battles he quelled all these insurrections in less than seven years. These were the days when Haggai (520 B.C.) and Zechariah (520-518 B.C.) stirred up the people to rebuild the temple and prepare for the long promised kingdom. Zerubabel, a young prince of the Davidic line, was governor

in Jerusalem, and the times seemed most auspicious. Later we shall follow their activity in detail.

When his enemies were silenced, Darius at once faced the task of consolidating his vast empire. He divided it into twenty satrapies, or provinces, and appointed over each a competent satrap, who was immediately responsible to the throne. While he permitted them large freedom in detail and method, he definitely regulated their duties. He substituted taxation for pillage and blackmail, greatly to the security and prosperity of the provinces. He built highways, developed a network of waterways, even planned a canal from the Nile to the Red sea, established a notable postal system, and marvelously promoted world commerce.

In 517 B.C. he visited Egypt, necessarily passing through Syria, and soothed the injured feelings of the people and the priests by repairing many of the ruins left by Cambyzes and by personally providing a sacred bull. In 515 B.C. he cast his eye towards Europe, bridged the Hellespont, and sought to establish Persian rule in the west. Here his ambition overvaulted his strength. The Greeks burned his western capital, and at Thermopylæ, in 490 B.C., he received a serious check. But more serious still, in arousing the Greeks, he had sown to the wind, and later his son reaped the whirlwind.

*The Actual Return*—How did these world events affect the captives in Babylon and the remnant in the holy city? A hasty reading of Ezra i. 2-4 and ii. 1-69 seems to show that a very generous edict was passed by Cyrus, and that a great host of exiles accepted the privileges and returned to their homeland in 536 B.C. But when we carefully compare the terms of Ezra i. 2-4 with those of Ezra vi. 3-5, which claims to be a copy of the original decree, their differences convince us that they cannot both be copies of the same decree.

It is possible that we have Jewish interpretations of the general decree of Cyrus when he took the city of Babylon (cf. p. 238). When we consider his official tolerance in matters of religion and his consideration shown towards conquered nations, we need not hesitate to accept an historic basis for this document. That those who wished to return to their own lands might do so, is reasonably certain.

An entirely different question is, what response did the Jews make to this privilege? Many of them, no doubt, were comfortably situated. They profited much both by agriculture and by commerce. Their<sup>4</sup> prosperity was greater than was ever known by their ancestors in Palestine. Their social contacts were more numerous, the prospects for their children brighter, the opportunities for office and prestige better in Babylonia or Persia than they could be in Jerusalem. They had now been in the land a half a century, and had taken root in the soil. To most of them it was home, while Judea was but a memory. And what a memory! Barren hillsides, wasted cities, contemptuous, plundering neighbors, and desolating armies must have bulked larger to most than the story of the prophetic message and the temple ritual. The ancient days were not days of prosperity, and few seemed to covet the privilege of return. Good reasons why they should not leave their adopted country would be easily found. Business connections could not be quickly severed. Even religion could be interpreted in favor of remaining among the Gentiles. Did not the "Servant Songs" declare that Yahweh had a great missionary purpose in the captivity? By remaining would they not publish the salvation of their God to the ends of the earth? We know, in fact, that many, if not most, remained in the land of their conquerors. As late as the eleventh century after Christ, a flourishing, self-governing Jewish colony,



with important schools of religion, existed in Babylon.

Our oldest record, in Aramaic, tells that Sheshbazzar (perhaps Shanazzar, the son of Jehoiakin) (cf. I Chr. iii. 18), was appointed governor of Judea by Cyrus, and was commissioned to carry back to Jerusalem the vessels of the temple (Ezra v. 14, 15). This corresponds with what we know of Persian policy. Quite probably early in 538 B.C. he returned, accompanied by a small band of the faithful escorted by the usual military guard. Sacrifice would be offered with the customary ritual on the natural rock in front of the temple ruins. Beyond that we cannot trace their movements with certainty. These facts gave to later devotees of temple worship the opportunity to fill in the details of the picture. The enumeration of the sacred vessels (Ezra i. 5-11), the march of the returning exiles (I Esdras iv. 47-v. 6), the register of the faithful (Ezra ii. 2-69), and the interruption of the building by adversaries (Ezra iv. 1-5), all save the register, were written by the chronicler over two hundred years after the events.

The consideration of all the internal evidence materially alters the picture. Ezra ii. 2-69, again found in Nehemiah vii. 6-69 and I Esdras v. 4-46, is a complete register of all those who returned from the captivity during two centuries under such leaders as Zerubbabel, Joshua, Nehemiah, Ezra, Mordecai, Bigvai, and others (cf. Neh. vii. 7). A surprising number of these names are the same as those who signed the covenant in 432 B.C. (cf. Neh. x. 1-27). A tribe of the pure Persian name, Bigvai, of over two thousand persons, is at least suggestive of long contact with that nation (Ezra ii. 14). Further, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were not aware in 520 B.C. of any important number of returned exiles. They speak as though the work must be begun at the very founda-

tion (Hag. ii. 18; Zech. iv. 9), and must be carried through by "the remnant of the people of the land" (Hag. i. 12, 14; ii. 3, 4; cf. Neh. i. 2). We must, therefore, content ourselves with a decree of Cyrus granting the Jews the privilege of return, with a Jewish prince as governor of Jerusalem, and with a small group of exiles, perhaps the poorest of the captivity, who returned to the city that Yahweh, their God, had chosen.

The city itself was indeed a sorry spectacle. The walls were still breached. The débris of the temple and the blackened moss-grown ruins of palaces still preserved the memory of the ruthless Babylonian. The population was comparatively small, perhaps less than ten thousand, and was mongrel. The remnant left after the captivities had intermingled with Samaritan and Arabian, Ammonite and Moabite. An absent singer could lament,

This is a people robbed and plundered,  
They are all snared in holes,  
And hidden in prison houses.  
They have become a spoil,  
With none to rescue,  
An object of plunder,  
With none to say, restore.

(Isa. xlii. 22.)

But this was in comparison with her former glory. These people were not without resources. For half a century they had had peace. In a small way they had prospered. Now some of them lived in ceiled houses, and the prophet believed they needed only to be aroused to the task in order to accomplish it.

*Building the Second Temple, 520-516 B.C.*—In 520 B.C. the time was ripe for action. The Persian policy of toleration towards all places of religion surely stirred some loyal souls. A severe famine had for a number of years impoverished Judea, and calamity is oft the

forerunner of revival (Hag. i. 5-11). The insurrections in the nine chief provinces of Persia, which threatened the rule of Darius, may have kindled national hopes in many hearts. Zerubbabel, born in captivity, a promising youth of the Davidic line, became the Persian governor of the city. Could conditions ever be more favorable for an aggressive policy?

Haggai, perhaps a local layman, in August, 520 B.C., began in most pointed language to urge the rebuilding of the temple (Hag. i. 12-15; cf. Ezra v. 2). Owing to his directness and energy twenty-three days later they set to work. By rebuke and promise he continued his oracles for three months. He was sure the world upheaval, that was in the Persian empire, would pave the way for the fulfillment of the promises of the prophets (Hag. ii. 20-22). He grew bold and predicted that Zerubbabel, the signet ring on the finger of the Most High, was chosen of Yahweh to succeed his grandfather as king of Judah (Hag. ii. 23; cf. Jer. xxii. 24).

Zechariah, of priestly family, a returned exile (cf. Zech. i. 1, 7, with Neh. xii. 4), began to urge the same task in October, 520 B.C. He had no less certainty of the immediate coming of the kingdom than his contemporary, but his expression was much more picturesque. Persian environment had molded his imagery. His horsemen are those of the royal post, his court of heaven bears resemblance to the Persian court, his angel messengers are adopted from the current theology of his masters, and Yahweh performs for his people the functions of a Persian monarch. With suggestive symbolism he declares that Yahweh still loves Zion, and will destroy all heathen nations (Zech. i. 7-20). Jerusalem will be restored (Zech. ii.), the religious and the civil leaders will be purified (Zech. iii.), and unitedly will support the temple service (Zech. iv.). Zerubbabel, who laid the foundation

of the temple, will also complete it (Zech. iv. 9). Sin will be punished (Zech. v. 1-4), and the cause of sin will be transported to the land of Shinar (Zech. v. 5-11). Yahweh will execute his judgment throughout the world (Zech. vi. 1-8), and Zerubbabel will be crowned (Zech. vi. 9-15). The moral demands of Yahweh (Zech. vii. 1-14) and the assurance that he will rescue his people from all quarters of the earth and prosper them, that through them he may be universally worshiped (Zech. viii. 1-23), are the closing messages of Zechariah, written in 518 B.C.

Under such inspiration the people worked with a will. Indeed, a tradition has been preserved by the chronicler, that the Samaritans caught up by the enthusiasm offered their assistance, but were curtly repulsed by Zerubbabel (Ezra iv. 1-3). Late Jewish hatred for their neighbors may have added color to the facts. The Aramaic document in Ezra had a tale of a different kind (Ezra v. 3-vi. 16). Tattenai, the Persian satrap of the province, heard of the building activity, questioned the elders concerning their authority, and commanded work to cease till a report had been received from the king. In due time Darius reported that the copy of the decree had been found, and commanded the satrap to assist rather than hinder the building of the house of God. While this document seems not to have been written for three-quarters of a century after the event, and there are some serious anachronisms in it (cf. v. 5 with iv. 24 and vi. 14 with the list of Persian kings), yet it is quite conceivable that a Persian official might have been hostile to the building of a Jewish temple under the direction of a prince of the royal line. Whatever the difficulties may have been, work was finished in March of 516 B.C. A dedication service, followed by the Pass-over celebration, was kept with great joy on the part of both the returned and the remnant (Ezra vi. 16-22).

This was surely one of the days full of significance for the future of religion.

Our information concerning the structure of this building is not very ample. From the literature of later days we can, however, gather some important facts. Unlike the temple of Solomon, it had no brazen sea, no ark of the covenant, and no pillars in front. It was not a royal temple as Solomon's had been; it was priestly, and was strongly influenced by Ezekiel's vision. It had an altar of incense which the first seemed to lack. Like Ezekiel's, it was isolated from all civil contacts. No palace, no judgment hall, no assembly room, no arsenal lay near it. It had two courts, where the first had one. The holy of holies was now separated from the holy place by a curtain. Thus the ideal of the prophet, that of the separation of Yahweh from all that was ritualistically common or unclean, dominated many of the features of this second temple. Many of the plans of Ezekiel's vision, however, could not be followed. The twelve tribes were not arranged on either side of the city. The temple was not built outside of the city limits, but stood on the ancient site that had been hallowed by centuries of sacred memories. The prince was not to be a mere figure-head as in Ezekiel, but was to be coequal with the priest. The temple entrances were not arranged so that they could be guarded as Ezekiel proposed, nevertheless the spirit of ritual holiness pervaded the whole scheme.

➤ *The Messianic Hope*—Apparently this little group, stimulated by Haggai and Zechariah, was unanimous. They worked with a will, and cherished a hope that came to them from the past. The seventy years of Jeremiah were surely at hand (Zech. i. 12; cf. Jer. xxix. 10). The Messianic kingdom seemed about to be initiated. The union of priest and prophet, of church and state was ready for consummation (Zech. iv. 2—



14; iii. 1-9). The hopes for the prince of the house of David blazed out anew in these intense days. National life had long been centered in the only dynasty Judah ever knew. The calamity of the exile added urgency and color to the ideal. Ezekiel in the hour of the city's ruin held out the hope that Yahweh himself would shepherd his people (Ezk. xxxiv. 11-16), but later promised an ideal David as their ruler (Ezk. xxxiv. 23-31; xxxvii. 21-28). Jeremiah under the same strain predicted for the united and righteous Israel a righteous sprout, even David, as king, who should be called Yahweh, our righteousness (Jer. xxiii. 3-8).

But the two most remarkable characterizations of the Messianic king are found in Isaiah ix. 1-7 and xi. 1-10. He is the child with the four names, wonderful-councilor, mighty-god, father of eternity, and prince of peace. The last one reminds us of the Servant Songs, and the second one of Ezekiel's strange combination. In the eleventh chapter we again meet the teacher of Isaiah xlii. 1-6, and this time he is linked up with the "sprout" of Jeremiah. These two great poems, whether written before or during these days, as some of the most careful scholars think owing to what they have in common with Jeremiah and Ezekiel, must have lightened the toil of the builders, while they quickened the noblest ideals of race and religion.

A similar hope is beautifully expressed in Micah v. 2-9 (cf. Nah. i. 12, 13, 15; ii. 2). The village of David is to be glorified in its descendant. The remnant shall return, and he, the ruler, shall nurture them in the strength of Yahweh. From very small beginnings they shall develop a great kingdom with power to meet the greatest adversary, and they shall extend their sway to the ends of the earth. From 520 to 516 B.C. a little group in Jerusalem was eagerly and expect-

antly toiling for the opening of this Messianic kingdom.

If we can interpret the ancient story aright, at the completion of the second temple in 516 B.C., we stand at the point of union of a number of great ideals which had long and slowly been developing, and were now held in a happy blend by a few zealous people. Ritual and morals flowed together as part of one whole. The religious and the civil were found in full accord. The people and the prince were partners in righteousness, and influenced by the spirit of the "Servant of Yahweh," even international enmity had become a thing of the past. We may well believe that the historian was quite restrained when he said, "they kept the dedication of the house with great joy."

But now we ask, what next? And the silence of history has never been more tantalizing. We scan the pages of ancient records and of Scripture for an answer, and none is found. The conjecture that the temple was destroyed and Zerubbabel slain, based on an interpretation of an obscure verse from a later writer, creates more difficulties than it solves (Isa. lxiii. 18; liv. 10). All that we know is that the history of the Jewish people for the next seventy years is a blank, and when they again emerge, their condition is more pitiable than ever. Zerubbabel passed from the stage, and with him the hope of the Davidic house, and so history decreed that even Ezekiel's consideration for the prince was greater than could be realized.

*Temple influence*—If the light of the Jerusalem colony went out in darkness, and a cloud hung over the subsequent seventy years, we must not fail to appreciate the part the temple played in this obscure period. In splendor it may not have approached that of Solomon; in function it was the leaven that permeated the whole of Judaism. Outwardly there may

have been little that suggested vigorous life, but it nourished forces that later dominated the religion of many of the nation. It became the rallying point for all the faithful. The annual festivals became increasingly important both to those in the homeland and to those scattered among the kingdoms. It kept alive a sense of unity, and provided an outlet for religious devotion. It was the home of the priesthood. The ritual gradually was made more impressive. Details were slowly worked out, and the services were beautified. Priests, drilled in their duties, naturally divided the labors, and gradually divided into orders, higher and lower. Processionals, with varied vestments, swinging censers, and genuflections developed apace. Calls to service, responses by the officers or the worshipers, passed imperceptibly over into chant and song. It was the seed-bed of priest craft, and during two centuries, through the natural development of home talent and the influx of forms from foreign climes, it flowered out into a well-ordered, stately, helpful worship.

*The Scribe*—Alongside of the growing dignity and usefulness of the priesthood, went the development of the scribe. The temple became the center of literary activity, where all those features that were the chief interest of the sacerdotalist were carefully worked over. Men interested in genealogy, in religious customs and institutions, and in the writings of the fathers were, in these dark days, carefully copying, elaborating, and interpreting. The fire of true devotion to the God of the nation must have been kept alive in many hearts by the varied ministry of the temple. Hopes that were shattered by the experiences following 516 B.C. were thus quietly undergoing reconstruction, and in due time would again bear fruit. The scribe, often working in seclusion, was the interpreter and chronicler of those hopes.

## B—THE FIFTH CENTURY B.C.

*Persian History, 500–400 B.C.*—A few facts in Persian history need to be noted. For a century and a half following Darius I, weak, base men occupied the throne, and each in his own way contributed to the downfall of his country. Xerxes (486–464 B.C.) succeeded his father, but lacked the personality to cope with the tasks that awaited him. Determined to subdue Greece, he raised a great army and marched west. Thermopylæ and Salamis, Plataea and Mycalæ tell the story of broken fortune and shattered hopes. It is possible that the Jewish people suffered considerably during his reign. The book of Esther, though written much later, gives a pretty shrewd sketch of the character of this king under the name Ahasuerus. It may also accurately reflect the general attitude towards the Jews in captivity. Even in Palestine they may have suffered petty persecution (Ezra iv. 6). But, on the other hand, it is possible that the astounding victories of the Greeks may have raised great expectations in the hearts of hopeful Israelites. Did weary eyes see in this a presage of a coming dawn, such as their ancestors saw in the victories of Cyrus and the insurrections against Darius?

Under Artaxerxes I (464–424 B.C.) Egypt gained in 460 B.C. a momentary freedom, and about the same time it seems that the Edomites, pressed out of their ancient citadel by the Nabatæans, were gradually encroaching on the territory of Judah and thus intensifying the long-standing racial hatred. The prophetic response to this catastrophe, that must have been felt so keenly throughout Jewry, may perhaps be preserved in Malachi, Isaiah xxxiv., xxxv., lvi.–lxii., lxiii. 1–6, and Obadiah. It was in the twentieth year of this reign that Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem,

and in his thirty-second year again visited the city. This king was on the whole a kind man, though weak. He cared more for his harem than for his world empire, and was ruled by favorites rather than by statesmen.

Xerxes II, his successor, who was murdered inside of two months, was succeeded by Darius II (424-404 B.C.), who in turn left his throne to Artaxerxes II (404-358 B.C.). These were days when the provinces were left largely to themselves, particularly in the reign of the mild and easy-going Artaxerxes. It seems most plausible that it was in this reign that Ezra introduced his reforms into Jerusalem.

—*Nehemiah precedes Ezra*—From 516 B.C. on till the middle of the fifth century B.C. all is silent concerning the movements of the Jews. The building of the temple seems to have been only an episode. No kingdom had been established. What tragedies occurred, what hopes were blasted, we do not know. But in the middle of the Persian period we are again able to follow the pathway of history. The memoirs of Nehemiah (cf. p. 245) are contemporary sources quoted almost verbatim, and the rest of the Ezra-Nehemiah book has an historical basis. The chronological arrangement, however, gives us a real difficulty. For centuries very naturally, Ezra was dated in the seventh year of Artaxerxes I, and thus was supposed to have arrived in Jerusalem in 458 B.C., about fourteen years before Nehemiah. But it seems strange that Nehemiah in all his activity did not come into contact with Ezra. In his memoirs there is no mention of his fellow kinsman. Further, when we note that the wall is already built when Ezra appears (Ezra ix. 9); that Eliashib was high priest in the time of Nehemiah, but his grandson, Jehonahan, was an important temple-officer, perhaps high priest, in the time of Ezra (Neh. xiii. 4; cf. Ezra x. 6; Neh. xii. 23,



11, 12); that Jehonahan was actually high priest in 411 B.C., according to the Assuan papyri (cf. G. A. Smith, *Jerus.* ii. 360); that Nehemiah organized the treasury and appointed four treasurers (*Neh.* xiii. 13), while Ezra found four treasurers ready to receive his gifts (*Ezra* viii. 33), we become suspicious of the theory that makes Ezra precede Nehemiah. It further looks very strange that the same Persian king should send two missions to Jerusalem, for much the same purpose, at practically the same time, with much the same authority. It seems much more consistent with all the facts of the case to place Ezra later than Nehemiah, perhaps even as late as the seventh year of Artaxerxes II, that is, in 398 B.C. Thus he came more than thirty years after the last recorded visit of Nehemiah, and this suits the conditions suggested in all our documents. It is true that we find the names of these two leaders placed side by side in a number of lists, but these all come from the pen of the chronicler, whose knowledge of chronological detail, as we have seen, does not make him an infallible witness (*Neh.* viii. 9; x. 1).

*Nehemiah's Activity*—Nehemiah, a layman, who had attained high honors in the Persian court at Susa, learning of the misfortune of his people in Jerusalem, gained permission from Artaxerxes in 444 B.C. to make a brief visit to the city of his father's sepulcher, and to rebuild the walls (*Neh.* i. 1-16). He came to the city with a military guard, made a careful inspection of the walls, called a council, showed his authority, and proceeded to organize the inhabitants and set them to the task of building (*Neh.* i. 17-20). The non-Jewish population of the neighborhood, Ammonites, Arabians, Ashdodites, and Samaritans of whom Sanballat was governor, jeered at the workmen, then objected, and then plotted to stop the work (*Neh.* iv. 1-23). Difficulties arose within the city. The

poor had in some cases, because of necessity, mortgaged land and children (Neh. v. 1-13). A council was called, and Nehemiah by his appeal and his example succeeded in persuading the rich to forego usury and even to cancel the debts of the poor (Neh. v. 6-13). The adversaries continued their opposition throughout. Tobiah the Ammonite tried to stimulate a faction of the Jewish nobility and put Nehemiah in fear (Neh. vi. 17-19). Sanballat invited Nehemiah to meet in council in one of the villages, but after four such invitations had been refused, the schemer sent him an open letter accusing him of conspiracy (Neh. vi. 1-10). It is possible that Ezra iv. 8-23, which indicates that the Samaritans wrote a letter to Artaxerxes, stating that the walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt, and appealing to him to put an end to the rebuilding of the city, may refer to some of the difficulties that were faced by Nehemiah. The walls, however, were completed in fifty-two days (Neh. vi. 15); the gates were set up later (Neh. vii. 1-4); the city was officered, and guards appointed (Neh. vii. 2-4); and the dedication ceremony was carried through in due form (Neh. xii. 27-43).

How long Nehemiah remained on his first visit is not certain. Nehemiah vi. 14, which considers him resident governor for twelve years, is scarcely in accord with other passages (cf. Neh. vii. 2; xiii. 6; ii. 6). However, in 432 B.C. he again visited the city and found conditions very unsatisfactory (Neh. xiii. 4-22). He drove Tobiah out of the temple-chamber, ordered adequate provision for the Levites, appointed treasurers, and demanded that there should be due observance of the sabbath. He made a violent attack on some of the pro-foreign element, slapped their faces, pulled their hair, and made them take an oath against foreign intermarriages (Neh. xiii. 23-30).

→ Nehemiah was one of the great religious patriots

of Judaism. He faced a situation well-nigh impossible. None but the most resolute and self-sacrificing would have dared attempt it, and only the strongest could have carried it through. He rallied the energies of a weak and helpless folk, and put them to work at a serious task. He stirred up the spirit of brotherhood, and the usurer gave up his gains. He appealed to the sanctions of religion, and the merchants closed down on sabbath commerce. He found the foreigner a source of weakness to his people, read them the riot act, and cleansed the city of their influence. For centuries he was the only representative of this period to enter the hall of fame of Judaism. Ben Sirach (xliv. 11-13) and II Maccabees (i. 18-23) alike crown him and alike fail to mention the name of Ezra.

*Ezra*—The achievements of Ezra the scribe, preserved and interpreted by the priestly school, lost nothing of glamour or ecclesiastical character by the process. Beyond that, later tradition made him responsible for much activity that was the result of the slow process of history, and in fact wove much of legendary character around his name. That he was idealized must be admitted, but that he had part in a definite scribal and ritualistic movement need not here be doubted.

He came from Babylon perhaps about 398 B.C. He was the leader of a group of similarly-minded men, provided with the necessary passports, and bearing gifts to the temple (*Ezra* vii. 1—viii. 36). The statistics of the chronicler are quite characteristic and must be used with caution.

Some time later he had the privilege of reading the law book to an assembly in Jerusalem while interpreters made plain the meaning (*Neh.* vii. 73—viii. 8). On the second day they found the command to keep the feast of booths, and as it was the seventh month they straightway observed it (*Neh.* viii. 13-18). For

seven days, day by day, they read the law and kept the feast, followed on the eighth day by a solemn assembly.

At another time, likely later, he was informed that the priests, Levites, and princes had freely intermarried with foreigners (Ezra ix. 1-2). In great distress he rent his mantle, tore his hair, and confessed the sins of his people (Ezra ix. 3-15). The people consented to a divorce court, which after sitting two months found that 113, of whom four were priests, six were Levites, and four were singers and porters, were guilty (Ezra x. 18-44). A public fast was proclaimed, the guilty parties put away their wives and families, confessed their sins, and all entered into a covenant not to marry foreigners, to observe the sabbath, and the sabbatical year, to pay the temple poll-tax of one-third of a shekel, to supply the wood for the sacrifices, and to pay the tithe (Neh. x. 28-39).

*The Law Book*—The exact bound of Ezra's law book is not clear. The reforms mentioned can in part be found in D. or in P. The poll-tax of one-third shekel and the requirement of the wood offering are found nowhere in the Pentateuch. The poll-tax mentioned in Exodus xxx. 11-16 is one-half shekel. But the general spirit of the law was ritualistic, and perhaps we are not justified in saying more than that it was the continuation of the ideal and the spirit of Ezekiel and H. C. It conceived that the favor of a holy God could not be gained apart from separation from all that defiled. Punctilious observance of ceremonial law was the pathway of life. With this covenant we are on the trail to full-fledged pharisaism which prided itself in its legalism. The nation was fast becoming a church, and boasted in its exclusiveness. The prince was no longer necessary; now the priest alone should rule.

*Contemporary Literature*—Contemporary writers

seem to have been numerous. The priestly influence was very strong, but a body of literature that may well be called prophetic bears the impress of these days. Malachi, Isaiah xxxiv., xxxv., lvi.-lxiii. 6; ii. 2-4; Mic. iv. 1-5; vii. 7-20, and Obadiah minister to just such a period as we know the beginning of the later half of the fifth century to have been, better than to any other time.

Edom figures in each of these sections, and in general the attitude towards her is the same. Though she was the closest of kin to Israel, there had always been the deepest enmity between the two nations. During the early history Israel had held Edom in subjection, and her treatment of her was anything but generous. With the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. the tables were turned. Edomites were in the besieging army, and they gloated over the fall of their old oppressor. Now, when the Nabatæan is driving her out of her rocky fortresses, it was Israel's turn to raise the taunt song. Malachi in his Socratic way announced that Edom was beaten down and that Jehovah had indignation against her forever (Mal. i. 2-5). Obadiah cried out against the same enemy. "Behold I have made thee small among the nations, thou art greatly despised . . . for the violence done to thy brother Jacob . . . thou shalt be cast off forever" (Ob. i. 1-14, 15b).

In a singularly striking poem arranged antiphonally another writer published the doom of this people. Jehovah is a warrior, who single-handed had gone to the fray and trampled into the dust the ancient enemy (Isa. lxiii. 1-6). Edom, perhaps, became a symbol for the nations, and the glimpse of apocalypticism that is found in Isaiah lix. 16-21 and in Isaiah xxxiv. but broadens out the above theme. We cannot read these passages without feeling their kinship. Their passionate hatred to Edom is overflowing. The pressure



of the enemy on the south of Judah, raiding and pillaging, taunting and acting in a high-handed manner because of their superior brute force, is the explanation of these outbursts. But the Nabatæan was on their trail, and these writers are confident that Yahweh, the God of righteousness, cannot tolerate the continued prosperity of such a people. He will hurl them back and will cause his people Israel to dwell in safety.

*Jerusalem: Her Inner Life*—The picture of the social and religious life of Jerusalem found in the above sections is in keeping with that which we know to have existed in the fifth century B.C. The temple had been built (Isa. lvi. 7; lx. 7; lxii. 9; Mal. iii. 10), but the walls were breached (Isa. lviii. 12; lx. 10; lxi. 4). Jerusalem was in mourning and desolate (Isa. lix. 20; lx. 15; lxi. 3; lxii. 4); the villages were waste and the people were dispersed (Isa. lvi. 8; lix. 19; lxi. 7). Many were quite indifferent to religious matters, some were idolatrous (Isa. lvii. 3-13), and others were skeptical (Mal. i. 7; ii. 17, iii. 14-15). Even the priests were negligent in their duties (Isa. lvi. 10-12; Mal. i. 6, 13; ii. 8, 9). Ritual was carelessly performed (Mal. i. 7, 14), the tithe was neglected (Mal. iii. 8-10), and shameful practices were common (Isa. lvii. 3-10). Intermarriage with foreigners was altogether too prevalent, and, more shameful still, Jewish wives were divorced in order that foreigners might be married (Mal. ii. 10-16). Morally the corruption was great (Isa. lvii. 1, 2; lviii. 1-4; lix. 2-15). The widows and the poor were oppressed (Mal. iii. 5), and the foreigner was by some held in high esteem (Isa. lvi. 3-8). Israel, scattered abroad without the privilege of temple worship, was often more acceptable to Yahweh than those who were living in Jerusalem (Mal. i. 11; Isa. lix. 19). Two classes existed at home, the righteous and the wicked, and the line of cleavage was found both in morals and ritual (Isa. lvii. 1, 3-13;

Mal. iii. 18; iv. 1-3). Yet the hope of the community which was emphasized most, lay in the strict adherence to the observation of ritual, the sabbath, and the tithes (Isa. lvi. 2, 6, 7; lviii. 2; lx. 7; lxi. 1-3, 6; lviii. 9-14; lix. 2-4; Mal. iii. 10). The ethical requirements, though frequently referred to, did not hold the prominent place they had in earlier prophecy (Mal. iii. 5; Isa. lvi. 1; lviii. 6-11; lvii. 17; lix. 2-8).

*Messianic Hope*—Sombre as the picture is, there was a heartening side to it. In the city there was a little band of the faithful, who loved Yahweh, companied together, prayed and planned together, together read the signs of the times, and believed that Yahweh would purge the nation and thus deliver it (Mal. iii. 10; cf. Isa. xxxiv. 16, 17; Ob. i. 17, 19-21).

This confidence took on various forms. Elijah is going to return and turn the hearts of the fathers to the children (Mal. iv. 5, 6); or the messenger of Yahweh will comfort the nation by exercising his teaching function (Isa. lxi. 1-3; Mic. iv. 1-3); or Yahweh himself, clothed in the mail of a warrior, will take vengeance on all the enemies of Israel (Isa. lix. 16-20), and his name will be feared from the east to the west (Isa. lx. 2, 16-20; Mic. iv. 1-3). Jerusalem, the bride of Yahweh (Isa. lxii. 4-5; lxi. 10, 11), will be gloriously established (Isa. lx. 10-22; lxii. 1-5; Mic. iv. 1-2); the exiles will return laden with treasure, and will be borne by their previous masters (Isa. lix. 1; lx. 4; lxi. 1, 4-7; lxii. 10-12); obstacles will be removed (Isa. xxxv., lxii. 10); and all nations will flow to the house of Yahweh (Isa. lx. 10-15; Mic. iv. 1-3).

Two viewpoints regarding the nations emerge in this literature. One is that of the stricter school, by which the heathen are banned from all worship, and are doomed to be the hewers of wood and the drawers of water for Israel (Isa. lx. 10-14; lxi. 4-7; Mic. vii.

15-17). The other ideal is that the nations may have all the privileges, civil and religious, that belong to Israel, if they are but obedient (Isa. lvi. 1-8; Mic. iv. 2-3).

In all this literature we miss the figure of a Messianic king. We have the ideal of a teacher and of a conquering Yahweh, but there is no Cyrus or Zerubbabel on the horizon. That hope seems to have perished during the previous century. In its place is a community, a holy people, a nation of priests who cherish the word of Yahweh which was in written form (Isa. xxxiv. 16; lix. 21; Mic. iv. 2), and whose hope is in the covenant (Isa. lvi. 6). Their trust seems now to be less in the material and the national, and more in those influences that touch the mind and heart, and in the Holy One of Israel.

#### C—THE CLOSING DECADES OF PERSIAN SUPREMACY 400-332 B.C.

*Historical Background*—The fourth century witnessed very little change in the external conditions of the Jews. Their life in Jerusalem must have been dull and drab. Always paying tribute, never populous or affluent, the shades were sometimes darker, sometimes lighter. In the early decades of the century they may have gained possession of a number of outlying villages and thus have widened their borders (Neh. xi. 25-35; cf. Neh. iii.).

To this time also belongs the Samaritan schism. The drastic divorce regulations of Ezra no doubt added fuel to the long standing feud which had been intensified by Nehemiah. Josephus gives a story of the final rupture which has the marks of trustworthiness. He states that the elders at Jerusalem demanded that a certain priest, Manasseh, who had married a daughter

of Sanballat, should either divorce her or give up his priestly privileges (cf. Neh. xiii. 28). His father-in-law encouraged him to resist and promised him a temple in Gerazim. Manasseh, thereupon, with a number of priests and Levites who had in like manner sinned withdrew to Samaria, and later Alexander the Great, after his conquest of Persia in 331 B.C., granted them the privilege of building the required temple. It was erected, and worship similar to that in Jerusalem was instituted (Jos. Ant. xii., i. 1). The Samaritan Bible is essentially the same as the Hebrew Pentateuch. The evidence indicates that while there was a prolonged antagonism between the two cities (cf. Isa. lxv. 11; lxvi. 1-5), they had much in common religiously till after the beginning of the fifth century, and that probably the final break did not take place till late in the Persian period. The intense hatred of the chronicler about 300 B.C. towards the Samaritans would lead us to conclude that the rupture was then complete, but perhaps of recent date (II Ch. xxv. 7-13).

The later years of Persian rule must have been unfavorable to the Jews. Artaxerxes II was succeeded by his son Artaxerxes III (358-338 B.C.), a man of entirely different mold. He was a despot, merciless and cruel. Egypt, along with the Phœnician states, revolted in 353 B.C., and the Persian army proceeded to break the rebellion. Her armies were in the country for ten years, during which time Egypt was subdued and severely punished. The Jews may have been party to the revolt, for many of them were deported to Hyrcania and Babylonia. According to Josephus, Bagoas, the Persian general, enraged because Johanan had murdered his own brother in the temple, defiled the temple, and placed a heavy tax on the daily sacrifice for ten years (Jos. Ant. xi. 7). During the closing years of the Persian supremacy the Jews seem to have

had every reason to welcome a change of sovereign power.

↗ *Literature from 400 to 330 B.C.*—During the last seventy years of Persian rule there were at work in Judaism a number of well-defined religious ideals, each of which gained its adherents and made its contribution to the life of the little community and to the world. The legal, the protestant, the liturgic, the philosophic, and the apocalyptic were all in evidence.

*Legalism*—Legalism is not an inappropriate term for that movement of which Ezra became the head. With definite origins in 621 and 572 B.C., its development continued long after the close of the canon. The fourth century, however, marked the flood tide of its activity. The covenant on the part of the community to observe the law called for many interpreters, stimulated the leaders to renewed effort, and added recruits to the propaganda.

The law itself was collected and elaborated. It is likely that shortly after 400 B.C., what is known as the P. code, that mass of ceremonial detail scattered throughout Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, was in essentially its present form. Writers of ecclesiastical history, saturated in the priestly outlook, must have soon appeared. The early national history found in JED. had for two centuries been the property of the religious leaders, and must have been widely known. To all who knew it, it must have been a sacred oracle. P., the new code, parallel to it in some of the laws and more advanced in others, though covenanted to by the people, could never displace the older law and history in the affection of the community. At best it might lie side by side with it. But there were differences, sometimes most marked, between the two. Shall they lie side by side and thus ultimately develop two schools antagonistic one to the other? Or can they be blended into a more or less harmonious whole? Of



course JED. had not given all the facts of history, or of institutions, and its general conclusions did not quite satisfy this new school. To keep the sabbath, to pay the tithe, to observe the feasts, to offer the daily sacrifice, to remain separate from the heathen, in a word to perform the works of the law, this was essential to national prosperity. History had proved that, to the priests, if it had proved anything. JED. was far from definite on some of these points. Hence, for the admonition of all future generations the priests conceived that history must be rewritten. But much of the early and important material was already in JED. Thus there was in reality only one method for the new historians to adopt. JED. must be incorporated in P. Genealogical tables, statistical enumerations, stories of ancient religious institutions, together with many ancient traditions, and a mass of time-honored priestly custom were all in the possession of the priestly writers. With their genealogical and statistical tables as a framework, and their ritualistic ideal as their philosophy of history they used the JED. compilation almost in its entirety, and reworked the whole into our present Hexateuch. No doubt it was a long and slow process, which occupied many minds and passed through more than one edition, each time receiving some added material or interpretation which brought the whole into more perfect conformity with the religious principles of the editors. While we cannot name these laborers and hence must use some symbol such as P., their achievement was not therefore less important, nor do we honor the results less because the authors are unknown.

The intense religious influence of this school cannot here be detailed, but one illustration may suffice as a symbol of their reforming zeal. The descendants of those who in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra were so lax about keeping the sabbath, in 321 B.C. suffered

the capture of the holy city and wholesale slaughter, rather than violate the letter of the law. The completed Hexateuch stands as their monument. From them it received its present form and unity. By them it was canonized, and by their influence it became the "Holy of Holies" to later generations.

*The Scribe*—The scribe was the product, and in turn the propagandist, of this ideal. His work was of the greatest importance. He had a book, and that book was the word of God. His duties were to transcribe, to teach, and to interpret the law. Through him prophecy seemed to be unnecessary, and by him anonymity became the rule. The selection, as well as the preservation of the canon was in his hands. If his arrangement of sections, his historical notes, and suggested authorship, as well as his interpretations and interpolations sometimes perplex the most competent student, the wealth of invaluable historical and religious material that he gathered and preserved through the most trying national crises places all the world forever in his debt.

*The Liberal Reaction*—A propaganda so vigorous, and we might say so radical, as that of legalism could scarcely fail to arouse antagonism. Loyal Jews, who had no personal ends to serve as had the Samaritans, may also have looked askance at this thoroughgoing régime. It was true the reformers invoked the evidence of history, but the ancient past had also other voices. The exclusive attitude had not always been the law of Israel. The delightful story of Ruth, the Moabitess, came to the minds of the more tolerant, and some one gave it its present literary form about this time. It was excellent counter-propaganda. No more winsome character was known to Israel, and yet this woman of alien blood was the great-grandmother of David. This provided strong argument against the decree of Ezra. Others no doubt remembered the

wide sympathies of prophets such as Amos, who declared that the Ethiopian, the Philistine, and the Syrian were to Yahweh as were the children of Israel (Amos ix. 7-8). The missionary spirit of the "Servant Songs" would hardly coincide with this intolerance. A writer already mentioned comforted some who were disturbed by this puritanism by assuring them that eunuchs might obtain a memorial in the temple, and foreigners might minister to Yahweh, if they kept the sabbath and held fast the covenant, for "my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isa. lvi. 3-8).

*Jonah*—At a later date the book of Jonah helped to stem the same tide, and may have been a piece of real missionary propaganda. The message of the book is that found in the last verses, and proclaims the love and care of Yahweh even for those who had been the most brutal oppressors of Israel. How large and influential the body who opposed the narrow view of Ezra and his successors was, we do not know, but the fact that we have so many bold expressions against racial intolerance in the literature that was preserved by the priestly and hence the exclusive body, suggests that they must have been no negligible quantity.

*Temple Music*—The temple was the home of the law, but its ministrations were not limited to legalism. The second temple, unlike the first, developed singing as a part of its service. Ezra ii. 41 is our earliest reference to a class of singers for religious worship. This was limited to responses, recitation in unison, and intonation. Harmony is comparatively modern. The development of the temple music no doubt was slow. Singing, in social and military gatherings, had been common before the exile (Amos v. 23). In Babylon "the songs of Zion" became a part of their religious exercises (cf. Ps. cxxxvii.) and by 300 B.C. an elaborate musical service was in use in the temple (I Chr. xv.

16-24). Later a pipe organ was built in the temple by Herod, and still later we hear of boy choirs being used.

*The Psalms*—Religious hymns had, as we have seen, been composed before the exile. The captivity added its quota, and still more came to birth after the exile. Because of the revisions through which all songs pass, it is a useless task to attempt to relate each and all to the circumstances of their origin. It is altogether likely that with the new emphasis on the temple worship many psalms came into being after the time of Ezra.

The book of Psalms consists of a number of compilations. Five books are definitely marked off by doxologies. They are: I i.-xli.; II xlii.-lxxii.; III lxxiii.-lxxxix.; IV xc.-cvi.; V cvii.-cl. A study of the titles shows that these were in turn built up out of smaller collections. We notice that xlii.-xliv. all bear the title "of the sons of Korah," l., lxxiii.-lxxxiii. are entitled "of Asaph," and cxx.-cxxxiv. are called "songs of ascent." We find repetition in the different books, as xiv. and liii.; xl. 13-17 is repeated in lxx.; xxxi. 1-3 is the same as lxxi. 1-3; and lvii. 8-13 is closely related to cviii.

Making a closer study, we find marked characteristics separating the books from each other. Book I has a decided preference for the name Yahweh (found 272 times while God is found only 15 times), while Book II has a preference for God (found 164 times and Yahweh is found only 40 times). Book III has God 36 times and Yahweh only 13 times, but Books IV and V have Yahweh 339 times and God is found only in Psalms cviii. and cxliv. There is just as marked a difference in the general tone of the different books. Book I is largely personal. Books II and III are more largely national, and IV and V are chiefly ritualistic. The first books abound in confession of

sin; the last ones never. Linguistic features which are quite noticeable indicate origin in different periods.

There is every evidence that collections of hymns had been made before the time of the writing of Chronicles. The first collection, i.-xli., may perhaps go back earlier than the time of Ezra, but could scarcely precede the dedication of the second temple in 516 B.C. That small collections of songs may have been gathered and used on festival occasions at various hillside sanctuaries much earlier than this, is quite probable, but our present collections in their present form seem to belong to the post-exilic community. Books II and III, which contain the collections to the Korahite and the Asaphite guilds, referred to in I Chronicles vi. 31-48; xvi. 41; II Chronicles xxxv. 15, were not likely compiled long before 300 B.C., as they indicate a development in music that seems later than the time of Ezra, when only one choir is mentioned (Neh. xi. 17; xii. 24; Ezra ii. 41; x. 24; Neh. vii. 1, 4). The last two books naturally were collected still later. But even after the formation of a collection there was nothing to hinder the insertion of individual psalms, as for example, Maccabean psalms, as we shall see later.

The earliest of these collections, Book I, must have been used in worship during the century of legalistic development following Ezra. It is full of the finest spiritual conceptions and rich in the expression of a vital personal faith in Yahweh. The moral tone leaves nothing to be desired. Confession of sin, the cry of penitence, and the joy of forgiveness, all blend with exultant praise and glowing aspiration. The praises of the law are sung but twice (i., xix. 7-14), and sacrifice is mentioned only once, and then the voice is that of the prophet (xl. 6-8). The constant use of these psalms surely nurtured a type of piety which must have often tempered the rigors of legalism.



*Wisdom Literature*—There was yet another company, who because of temperament and experience faced their world from still another angle. These were the "wise men" of Israel. They had their representatives in every generation, and by parable, proverb, and problem, illumined and broadened the borders of thought.

*Job. The Date*—The greatest of their race gave to posterity some time towards the close of the Persian period one of the most sublime pieces of literature found in any language. The book of Job sets forth one of the most penetrating interpretations of human suffering the world has ever seen. As the date or author are not stated in the book we must learn what we can from internal evidence. Clearly it is the product of an age of reflection, and would seem to follow Deuteronomy, Habakkuk, and Jeremiah. It has a world outlook and is not specifically Hebrew, which would indicate lateness of origin. Monotheism is an axiom to the writer, which would place him later than 540 B.C., the date of Deutero-Isaiah. The parody of Job vii. 17-18 on Psalm viii. 4, and the relation of this Psalm to Genesis i. would point us towards the middle of the fourth century as an approximate date for the book.

*The Prose*—Job seems to have been an ancient well-known character. The story of his suffering was a part of the common tradition which in part has been preserved in the prose sections of the book, i.-ii., xlii. 7-17. The teaching of this, a story that may have been written any time after the end of the seventh century, is plain. Job, a man of approved piety, suffered because Yahweh wished to prove to Satan that men served him for other than personal interest. The author seems to have reacted against the most natural interpretation of the Deuteronomic idea of rewards and punishments. The scene is laid

in heaven. The angelic beings are all gathered in assembly. Yahweh rallies Satan on what seems to have been his sore point. He doubts if there be disinterested goodness among men. He is given permission to test Job. Sword, fire, hurricane, and terrible disaster are the messengers he hurls on the head of the innocent victim of this experiment. Job, bereft but calm and philosophic, sins not, and even heroically endures the second and more personal test with unfaltering resignation to the will of God. All ends well, and the prose story concludes that the patient sufferer received a double reward. All this savors of that type of popular story which Oriental people love so well, quite fantastic and impossible, yet the medium of important religious truth.

*The Poem*—The poem, however, moves in quite a different atmosphere. The stage setting and the dramatic personæ belong to the real world. The problem here is how to justify the ways of God to man. Theology has ever sought an answer to this question. Job's contemporaries had one that had become their yard-stick for virtue. The orthodoxy of the day, based on the preëxilic prophets and Deuteronomy, held that suffering was always proportionate to sin, and that prosperity was the direct evidence of goodness. This poet, like Habakkuk and Jeremiah before him, challenged such a proposition. The poignancy of the mental agony felt in the early part of the poem suggests some painful personal experience on the part of the writer, deepened perhaps by the cumulative result of national suffering. The author knew the popular theory was not true universally. Calamity was not fully explained, either as punishment or as chastisement. His friends ably defended the theology of the fathers, waxed warm and even bitter, but Job, the symbol of suffering, maintained his innocence to the

end. He had personal evidence. Rationally the ways of God were not justified.

But religiously there came help. Job in his sixth speech, after the paroxysm of his rage had worn off, in a passage the Hebrew text of which is partly unintelligible affirms his confidence that he will be vindicated, and that he for himself shall see God (Job xix. 25-27). Faith is not sight, and unable to give a logical explanation for human suffering, this man voiced his confidence in a God of character. From this on, his fury subsided. He was broken, he could not understand, but his rebellion was gone. In Yahweh's answer there is a little help to faith. If Yahweh was wise enough to create the earth, shut up the sea within bounds, command the mornings, and perform all the marvels of nature, if he cared enough for the lion to provide him food, for the wild ass to set him free, for the ostrich to hatch out its young, or for the horse to give him his might and glory, was it not likely that the wisdom and the care of such a God for man would be such as to warrant the strongest personal confidence (Job xxxviii., xxxix.)? It is a rhetorical question drawn from nature and indeed from only one side of nature, but Job is humbled and silenced. No rational solution has been formulated for the question, but logic is not the measure of life. There are "reasons" that the head knows not of.

The speeches of Elihu (Job xxxii.-xxxvii.) stand apart from the rest of the book. The speaker is unknown by the friends and is unnoticed by either Job or Yahweh. These chapters are an interjection by a still later author, who was not satisfied with the way the case had been handled. He shows some erudition and much pious unction. He threshes the whole matter over again, and lays especial emphasis on the place of discipline in suffering. But after carefully reading it all over one does not feel that the impetuous youth

has either added anything new or bettered the arguments of the older counselors.

*Apocalypticism*—Apocalypticism, which is closely related to prophecy and in some respects a continuation of it, is another literary current that is found in this century. Its distinguishing features are briefly: (a) the use of symbols, figures, or numbers to convey the meaning to the initiated; (b) its interest is chiefly in "last things"; (c) it is prevailingly pessimistic; (d) this world will be destroyed and the new age introduced cataclysmically by God; (e) it is all anonymous, and most of it pseudepigraphic; (f) it is the product of periods of crisis, and has been justly called "tracts for hard times." In Zephaniah i. 14-17 and Ezekiel xxxvii. we find faint beginnings that easily shade off into the prophetic message. Isaiah lvi.-lxvi. has a number of sections that are still more definitely related to full-fledged apocalypticism (Isa. lx. 1-22; lxxv. 17-25; lxxvi. 18-22).

*Joel*—By the middle of the fourth century, or perhaps a little later, we have a booklet which is still further on the way. Joel writes when Judah is alone and her fortunes are at low ebb. He looks back on the dispersion among the nations, and hence wrote after the captivity (Joel iii. 1-3, 5). The temple and the city walls are standing, hence he is later than Nehemiah and Ezra (Joel i. 13; ii. 9, 17; iii. 17). The Greeks are known through their trade relations, and are expected by the prophet to invade the coast lands of Syria (Joel iii. 6, 7). Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia have been oppressing and scattering Judah (Joel iii. 2-5). A great locust plague bringing famine in its trail had recently overwhelmed the land and added terror and distress to the situation (Joel. i. 2-4, 9-12, 15-20; ii. 3-11, 15). When we add to these historical references the fact that much of the book is a mosaic from earlier writings, out of the seventy-three verses

twenty-three phrases or clauses are quotations, and when we note its interest in ritual, the conclusion that the book comes from the time after Ezra is apparent.

To the author, the locust plague was but the fore-runner of the day of Yahweh, which is strongly tinged with apocalyptic coloring. He calls on the people to fast and repent, to rend their hearts in order that Yahweh, who is gracious and merciful, may repent him of the evil that otherwise must come. Then the day of Yahweh is proclaimed as a day of vengeance on all the nations (Joel iii. 2-13, 19), but it is a day of refuge for the people of Yahweh (Joel iii. 16), and a day of great prosperity for the land (Joel ii. 18-27). It is to be accompanied by an outpouring of the spirit of prophecy on all classes, and Judah and Jerusalem shall be established for ever (Joel ii. 28-32; iii. 20).

*Isaiah lxiii. 7—lxvi. 21*—Another collection of oracles, *Isaiah lxiii. 7—lxvi. 21*, breathes the atmosphere of these trying times. Some great disaster has overtaken the community, the temple has been desecrated, the country is waste, schismatists are in the land, and idolatry is prevalent. They are all in poetic form and may be grouped in three divisions.

1. *Isaiah lxiii. 7-14* is a psalm of thanksgiving. It wistfully celebrates the deeds of renown that Yahweh himself achieved of yore for his people, although they resisted him and grieved his holy spirit.

2. *Isaiah lxiii. 15—lxiv. 11* is an urgent cry for compassion and immediate help. Disaster has overtaken the sanctuary, and the tribes of his inheritance are in grave need. The confidence of the poet in the fatherly care of Yahweh for his people is expressed very tenderly and beautifully (*Isa. lxiv. 7-8*).

3. The third section, *Isaiah lxv. 1—lxvi. 21*, consists of eight brief poems. They indicate that there are factions in the land. Apostasy and idolatry seem to be prevalent, and the writer is greatly vexed at the



evils of the day. But he is confident that the word of Yahweh to all the wicked is one of destruction, but the faithful are about to enjoy the best of everything.

If, as language and historical allusion would strongly suggest, these chapters were written just before the downfall of Persia, between 346 and 332 B.C., we can see how eagerly some of the religious leaders of the Jewish community longed for a change of rulers, and how confidently some of them believed those dark days of the reign of Artaxerxes III were but the prelude to the dawn.

The above literature indicates the variety and the vitality of the movements in Judaism during this age. If the national hopes rarely came to expression, and the prince of the house of David was entirely absent from the picture, there was an intensity of religious activity and a depth of confidence in the future that relieved it from all semblance of mediocrity. Though the nation's life must have been poorly organized and comparatively insignificant, its genuine piety left a rich heritage for succeeding generations.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE GREEK PERIOD,

332-135 B.C.

I AND II CHRONICLES; I, II AND III MACCABEES;  
DANIEL; ESTHER; PSALMS, BOOKS II.-V.; ISAIAH  
XXIV.-XVII.; ZECHARIAH IX.-XIV.; ECCLESIASTES;  
PROVERBS I.-IX., XXX.-XXXI.; SONG OF SOLOMON.

#### A—HISTORICAL SKETCH

ALEXANDER stands unquestioned at the head of world conquerors. The facts of his rise and triumph exceed the legends that have gathered around his name. In 336 B.C. he succeeded his father as head of the Greek confederacy. In 334 B.C., with a small, well-seasoned army, he became master of the Greek colonies in Asia Minor by the battle of Granicus. The victory of Issus in 333 B.C. laid Syria at his feet and opened the approaches to Egypt. In July, 332 B.C., he captured Tyre, received the homage of all Syria, and later in the year took Gaza, and at the mouth of the Nile laid the foundations of Alexandria. The battle of Arbela, won in October, 331 B.C., made him the master of Babylon and Persia. His authority touched the boundary of India by 328 B.C., and by 325 B.C. he received homage of the people as far east as the Indus.

A general he was in truth, but he was a man of culture as well. Following the dream of his father, Philip, and inspired by the glories of Greek art and

the ideals of Greek philosophy, which he had gained from his teacher, Aristotle, he planned that Greek customs and ideas should leaven the whole of the barbaric world. His program was well under way when in 323 B.C. death closed his meteoric career.

He had no successor. His empire, the prize of his generals, was ultimately divided amongst the four most outstanding army leaders. To Seleucus fell the eastern part of the empire, from Issus to India, while Ptolemy held sway in Egypt. Syria was, as always, the buffer state and again was the battle ground between the two. Greek armies trampled the soil of Palestine in one continuous armageddon. In the first forty years this territory passed back and forth, the booty of the spoiler no less than eight times. In 321 B.C. when Ptolemy I of Egypt captured Jerusalem on the sabbath day, no resistance was offered by the sabbath-keeping Jews, and he carried many of them captive into Egypt.

Ptolemy II (285–246 B.C.) by 280 gained for Egypt control over Palestine, which continued down to 198 B.C. with only insignificant breaks. He planted Greek garrisons throughout the province and made it the bulwark against encroachments from the north. Thus for a hundred years the borders of Judea, Philistia, and Galilee continued to be the battle ground for the armies of the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Syria. Ptolemy was kindly disposed towards the Jews, as he found them capable and energetic. He granted freedom to large numbers of those whom he had held as slaves, and his liberality encouraged others to flock to Egypt (Jos. Ant. xii. 1, 2). There seems to be good evidence that in his reign, about 250 B.C., the translation of the Pentateuch into Greek was commenced. It is quite possible that the beginning of the translation was due to the felt need on the part of many of the Jews to have their Scriptures in the

Greek, which was now their native tongue. The tradition that Josephus has preserved, carries us back to the earliest possible date for such activity (Jos. Ant. xii. 2, 1-2).

During the reign of Ptolemy III (246-221 B.C.) the lust for gold showed itself in the family of the high priest. Onias II, the high priest, greedy for his own gain, let the tribute to Egypt fall into arrears. Ptolemy's threats did not move the old man, and disaster seemed imminent when his nephew, Joseph, with his uncle's consent, went to Egypt about 230 B.C. to right matters. His lavish gifts to the king and his bid for the privilege of taxgathering in Syria, which was double that of his competitors, won the favor of Ptolemy (Jos. Ant. xii. 4, 1-6). Then opened a story of twenty-two years of plundering the people, Gentile cities as Askalon and Scythopolis particularly suffering, coupled with profligate and luxurious living on the part of Joseph, the taxgatherer. Hyrcanus, an illegitimate son, equally profligate, continued this unscrupulous policy until his suicide in 175 B.C.

The affliction of the Jews was further added to by Ptolemy IV (222-205 B.C.), one of the most reprobate kings of Egypt, if the Jewish traditions are to be credited. He is reported to have entered the temple, polluted it, degraded many Jews to the condition of slaves, and tortured and martyred many others of them (III Mac. iii., iv.). Gladly did they in those days turn to the Syrian kings, who were making war on Egypt for the possession of Palestine.

From 198 B.C., the date of the battle of Baniyas, the Seleucids became masters of the country (Jos. Ant. xii. 3, 3). Antiochus III (224-187 B.C.) permitted the Jews large freedom in civil and religious affairs (Jos. Ant. xii. 3, 3-4). Seleucus IV (187-175 B.C.) was less considerate. Antiochus IV (175-164 B.C.) determined

to impose Greek culture on his subjects. Jason, a Hellenized Jew, gained the office of the high priesthood through bribery, and his predecessor, the devout Onias III, thus deprived of leadership in Jerusalem, went to Leontopolis in Egypt, and there succeeded in building and dedicating a temple to the worship of Yahweh (Jos. "Jewish Wars" i. 1; cf. Isa. xix. 19-26). A Greek gymnasium was built in Jerusalem, and Greek games and customs began to undermine the Jewish piety and banish its symbols. In 172 B.C. Menelaus outbid Jason for the priesthood and sold himself completely to the Hellenizing party. Antiochus, soured by a military repulse in Egypt in 170 B.C., made the broils of the Jerusalem priests an excuse for plundering the temple, and putting a thousand Jews to death. Again in 168 B.C., because the Roman senate put a final check on his ambitions in Egypt, he let loose the flood of his rage on the Jews, whom he thought to be defenseless (II Mac. vi. 12-vii. 42). He razed the walls of Jerusalem, fortified and garrisoned the area of Solomon's palace, prohibited circumcision, sabbath observance and the possession of copies of the law, and insisted that all Jews should eat swine's flesh. He had an altar erected to Zeus in the temple, and the climax was reached when on December 25, 168 B.C., the sacrifice of swine was offered thereon (I Mac. i. 41-64). This was the "abomination of desolation" (Dan. xi. 31; xii. 11).

Then came the crisis. Many Jews violated the edict and suffered heroically for the forms of their faith. Others were unyielding. Mattathias, an aged priest at Modin, refused to offer swine's flesh, and in indignation slew an apostate Jew, who consented to do so, along with the Syrian officer who was supervising the worship. Blood had been spilled, and the standard of revolt was raised (I Mac. ii. 1-28). Judas Maccabeus, the third son of the intrepid patriot, became the



military leader and fought with a dash and daring that has seldom been equaled in history. The Chasidim, those pious keepers of the law, who were the strictest sect of their day, joined in the struggle with the enthusiasm of despair. Battle after battle against vastly superior forces was fought and won. Syrian generals of renown, Apollonarius, Seron, and Lysias, were outgeneraled, and armies hardened to the field of conflict were put to flight. Jerusalem, except the citadel, was finally captured, the temple was purified, the pagan altar was torn down, and on December 25, 165 B.C., regular Jewish worship was fully restored (I Mac. iii.-iv.).

For many, the goal had been reached when, in 163 B.C., they were granted freedom in religion by the Syrian power. The Chasidim had no enthusiasm for civil authority, and hence they were indifferent to further military achievement. Not so the Maccabees. Whether inspired by a literal interpretation of ancient national prophecies, or intoxicated by their unparalleled victories, they now dreamed of a Jewish kingdom. Judas, though his ranks were depleted, gained small successes against Edom, Ammon, and Gilead (I Mac. v. 1-5). Though sieged by a Syrian army for a short time in 163 B.C. in Jerusalem, he turned the tables by a brilliant victory over a Syrian force under Nicanor in 161 B.C., but he himself perished before the end of the year.

The struggle continued for decades with varying successes (I Mac. ix., x.). Two of Judas's brothers were murdered, one of them, Jonathan, having been high priest as well as leader from 153 B.C. to the time of his death (I Mac. ix. 28-30; x. 21, 69). Simon (143-135 B.C.), a third brother, was his successor to both offices and continued both the military and political policy of his predecessor (I Mac. xiii. 42-xvi. 18). Two factions existed in Syria, and these were played

against each other to the advantage of the Maccabees (I Mac. x., xi., xiii. 34-40).

Political freedom was at last gained for the Jews (I Mac. xv. 1-9). It seemed a new era for the little nation. Simon was made ethnarch and high priest, and the dual office was granted to him and his house in perpetuity (I Mac. xiv. 41-49). For eight years he wisely organized and developed his little kingdom. The boundaries were extended to the west, and Gezer and Joppa became Jewish cities. Rome, under the consul Lucius, to whom Simon had sent an embassy, decreed that nowhere should the Romans hurt or fight against the Jews nor be confederates with those who fought against them (I Mac. xv. 16-21).

These were glorious years, the years of small beginnings, which seemed to be big with promise for the fulfillment of ancient hopes. There were singers and writers in those days, and traces of their joy and hope may still be read in the Scriptures. Psalm cx. is an acrostic poem with the Hebrew letters for the name Simon as the initial letters of the verses, and in thought bears a very close resemblance to the aspirations of this time. But in 135 B.C. Simon was murdered, and again the light of national hope was quenched. The ensuing history and its literature, of which there is much of very great importance to the understanding of New Testament life and thought, cannot here be followed, as it lies beyond the bounds of the Old Testament canon.

*Influence of Greek Culture*—The fortunes of the Jews during these two centuries were as varying and as fruitful of religious ferment as in any period of their experience. The Greek life with which they were surrounded challenged them every day for weal or for woe. This was a new and exhilarating experience. The tides of culture, the new customs, the games, the hippodrome, the theater, the schools, the

joy of living, the worship of the beautiful, the reverence for philosophy, all came pouring through the valleys of Syria, fostered by bands of eager missionaries who believed that Greek ideals should dominate the world. Some were overwhelmed by the new life and its temptations. Others under its impact became legalists, sages, saints, or prophets. Sometimes the atmosphere was fatal to idealism, at others old hopes flamed out anew with a brilliancy and a confidence never surpassed. It was a growing, creative period, a time when there were many voices, and not as sometimes supposed a period of silence.

It was an era of growing cities. This was the symbol of Greek culture, and was Alexander's agent in spreading Hellenism. He himself founded some sixty cities and aided in the development of many others. His successors added hundreds of others. Each, colonized and governed by Greek free men, many of whom were retired soldiers, was the apostle of Greek ways and ideals. No place was more completely evangelized than Syria, and the plains around Judea gloried in the cities that flourished under this new impulse.

A new commerce was stimulated, owing to the new methods and the new concourse of nations. The new learning was thus carried to the bounds of the empire. Greek was the *lingua franca* of business, politics, and philosophy. Aristotle, Socrates, and Euripides, the philosophies of Zeno and Epicurus, were discussed in the theaters and taught in the schools. The captivity had loosened the Jew from his native soil and had quickened his trading instincts. He had become a citizen of the world, and now in plying his trade, he found his way into every city of the new empire.

The organization of the Jewish community was essential for its well-being. The sanhedrin was the final product of their history as a subject province.

The elders always occupied an important place in Oriental society. In Deuteronomy they are charged with judicial functions (Dt. xix. 12; xxi. 2). In the exile we get a glimpse of them in what seems to have been an advisory capacity (Ezk. viii. 1; xiv. 1; xx. 1). In the book of Ezra they are a definitely recognized institution (Ezra v. 5, 9; vi. 7, 14; x. 8). It was, however, so far as we know, not till the Greek period that the sanhedrin was fully developed with its membership of seventy-one selected from the princes, the priests, and the Levites, with the high priest as its head. It was thus aristocratic in its composition, and in function was the supreme court of justice for the Jews, exercising both legislative and executive powers.

But the major part of the Jewish nation wandered far beyond the border of their own country, yet wherever they settled they still remained in religion and sympathies wonderfully loyal to their inheritance. In no land was religion comparable to their own in morals, in thought, in hope, or even in symbolism. Whenever they could they visited Jerusalem and participated in the great festivals. But long pilgrimages could only be occasional, and were prohibitive to many. Observance of the sabbath was in the forefront of their law. In every city where they went they naturally met together for social, commercial, and religious ends. Copies of their law could easily be obtained. Interpretation and instruction were needed. Some regular place of meeting was required.

Thus developed the synagogue. Its roots run back most likely to the meeting of the elders in Ezekiel's home in Babylon, and other similar gatherings. The reform of Ezra, with the law book and the sabbath as central features, added to the necessity of some regular gathering. The Greek conquest with the opening up of many trade routes, the development of cities, and the ensuing migrations of the Jews com-

pelled the perfecting of this ancient school of religion. Only one reference to the synagogue is found in the Old Testament (Ps. lxxiv. 4). Egyptian papyri belonging to the reign of Ptolemy III refer a number of times to such Jewish gatherings in Egyptian cities. Hence we may conclude that towards the middle of the Greek period the synagogue took its final form.

The buildings were mostly of one type, oblong with a raised platform at one end, on which was a reading desk. One of the important articles of furniture was the box, or ark, in which the sacred roll was kept. The reading and interpretation of Scripture, prayer, and praise, formed the important part of the religious service on the sabbath. It was also used as a social center and as the assembly hall for judgment of cases between Jews. We can easily see how the synagogue, which was always surrounded by the Gentile world, would tend to develop a liberal type of Judaism.

## B—RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY ACTIVITY

### 1. *Legalism*

Greek influence was very marked in all the religious thought and activity of the age. It is probable that the earliest and most definite result was a vigorous reaction against all the new ideals. The law of Ezra had leavened the lump. Rules and ritual had been multiplied. Satisfactions were found by many in following definitely prescribed tasks. The rising incense, the vested priest, the temple response appealed to the æsthetic and nourished the instinct of worship. The "book" with its intricacies and its elaborate prescriptions, its narratives of human achievement and divine wonders gave range to the highest activities of mind and heart. It is no wonder that to many the "law" became the way of life.



The first product of this legalistic reaction was the writing of the ecclesiastical history, I and II Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah. The "school" or the writers who wrote this great book were the successors of those who wrote P. and completed the Hexateuch. They belong a century later, writing about 300 B.C., and were thus the heirs of P. and of a hundred years of priestly development. The singers had now attained Levitical rank (I Chr. xxiii. 3-5; xxvi. 1-19; II Chr. xx. 19), while earlier they were a lower order (cf. Neh. vii. 44; Ezra ii. 41). The priesthood was now organized into twenty-four courses, something that is not suggested earlier (I Chr. xxiv. 7-19). Other significant details resulted from the necessity of the case. In the face of the menace of the Greek religion they assume that the religious institutions of Israel had existed from the beginning, and they assert their divine origin, and show how they had been honored by Yahweh throughout a long history. To them the house of David, the Aaronic priesthood, and the worship in the temple were the only legitimate civil and religious institutions. The kings of Israel are not mentioned, and the priestly acts of others than the Levites and in other places than in Jerusalem are either passed over or strongly condemned. The good kings were reputed to have observed the commandments of the late priestly code, and the calamities that fell on the nation were the direct result of violation of the ritual of the priests.

This history is invaluable. It can be accepted as unquestioned evidence for the institutions, the thought, and the ideals of the priestly group of its own day and those immediately preceding. It is an exponent of the legalism of the late Persian and the early Greek period. Here we find Judaism with its ardor and its hope. It was interested supremely in the dress of the priest, the detail of the worship, and

the keeping of the law. Its adherents tithed mint, rue, anise, and cummin, and trembled in the presence of a God who marvelously manifested himself to those whose mode of worship was satisfactory, but with plague and earthquake visited those who disregarded his holiness. It is true the spirit was narrow and legalistic, but it was a conserving force and kept Judaism from being swept away in the new and strong currents of Hellenism. It was formal, but within its shell was a spirit that nurtured many of the most devout and saintly spirits of the day.

It is difficult to follow many of the chronicler's accounts of early events. As we have already seen in Ezra and Nehemiah (cf. pp. 245-246), he sometimes lacked historical perspective. No doubt he inherited numerous traditions that lay outside the book of Kings, some in written, some in oral form. He had at command, most probably, temple archives that gave much supplementary material. Some of these neglected stories charitably overlooked the failings of heroes, or interpreted the past in the most favorable light. Over all of these the editor placed the well-wrought priestly mantle. He was further guided in his selection and use of material, as was natural, by his priestly interests, rather than by a demand for rigid historical fact. Hence, this ecclesiastical history is not only a work that teaches legalistic Judaism in all its pages, but it presents this apparently without any consciousness that that legalism was the result of a long development.

## *2. Folk-Tales*

But the chronicler was not the only one who gloried in and idealized his racial inheritance. Slight historical incident has always been the fertile seed for later legend. The Jewish mind reveled in such during

this period. Persecution made them more insistent on their racial claims, and each worthy achievement and mark of distinction was transfigured through the art of the story-teller. Alexander offered obeisance to the high priest at Jerusalem (Jos. Ant. xi., viii. 4-7); Heliodorus was trampled on by a heavenly horseman (II Mac. iii. 24-36); the Jews were marvelously delivered from the intoxicated elephants, while the soldiers were crushed to death (III Mac. v-vii.); and so it goes.

A world of romance, peopled with loyal Jews among whom God worked in ways that were marvelous, was a real world to many Jews in days of heart-breaking tragedy. It was their world of hope, the only world of God they knew. These folk-tales may have been born of a credulous faith which readily found in history the thing it sought, but they lightened their sorrows and stirred many to deeds in real life that were as noble as any ever dreamed in fiction. Of one of these Luther exclaimed, "Is it fiction, then it is a truly beautiful, wholesome, profitable fiction, the performance of a gifted poet." In the interbiblical literature we have many such golden dreams. The additions to Esther add many dramatic and supernatural details to the canonical book. The history of Susana, Judith, the Song of the Three Holy Children, Bel and the Dragon, and Tobit, all come from the Greek period, most of them strongly savor of legalism, and all agree in glorifying the Jewish race and religion.

It is not strange that we find two selections in the canon that have some similarities with the foregoing. The book of Esther is the product of this period and of this spirit. In it are many realistic touches. The prominence of a Jew in a foreign court, the cruelty and the insults suffered by many of this nation, the immoral and irresponsible character of Xerxes, as well as many minor features, ring true to history.

But a Persian proclamation permitting the Jews to slaughter the Persians? The permission to continue it the second day? The results achieved by the handful of Jews in the Persian realm? Esther must not be known as a Jewess, while a Jew was in high authority in the court? A Jewess queen in Persia where the enactments concerning royal marriages were most rigid? Well, we can appreciate the purpose, but we must be slow to read it all as history. It is a tale with a purpose. It gives an adequate explanation of the feast of Purim, which in the later days was one of the important festivals of the Jewish people (Esther ix. 17-19). It further opened up a world of heroic achievement in which the distressed might for a time forget the depth of their sorrow. When we consider the spirit of the book, which, notwithstanding the serio-comic vein running through it in the hanging of the shortsighted, self-conceited courtier, is venomous with racial hatred, and note that it is devoid of any truly religious ideal, we are not surprised that it was admitted to the Jewish canon only after a prolonged struggle.

Daniel i. iii.-vi. has also much in common with this literature. These chapters are so different in tone from the rest of the book that they may be studied alone. They consist of stories that may have been very old and, no doubt, may have been related to events in the life of Daniel or of his contemporaries. But it is now generally conceded that the internal evidence points to the years 167-165 B.C. as the date of the composition of the present book.

Ritual is the main theme of these tales, and Yahweh is proved superior to the Persian deities by working marvels through his servants. Proof that he is with them is found in their ability to interpret dreams, in the marvels of the fiery furnace, of the lions' den, the physical beauty of the Jewish youths, and the writing

on the wall. Yahweh's interest in the race is assured by the honors that came to Daniel and his companions in the captivity.

Only such narratives could well cheer those who were mercilessly persecuted during the days of Antiochus Epiphanes and who then suffered the most appalling martyrdom for faithfulness to their ritual. It may be difficult for us to appreciate tales that are so far removed from the happenings of everyday life, yet when we pause to think, we remember not only that similar narratives console every persecuted people, but the stories themselves are usually the product of abnormal and feverish conditions. It requires only a little imagination to perceive that literature of this type helped to keep alive the faith and the piety of many of the Israelites during the closing centuries of the prechristian era.

### 3. *Liturgy*

The clash of arms here, as not infrequently, stirred up the poets as well as the soldiers. We can well believe that in this virile age, when the temple was so central to the life of all the people, when so many Jews at home and abroad were so zealous in the affairs of religion, many psalms may have been written. The fact that we have a group of seventeen religious songs in the Psalms of Solomon, written about 63 B.C., is ample evidence that there was no dearth at this time of sweet singers in Israel. Since the early christian centuries, however, it has been thought by many that Psalms xliv., lxxiv., lxxix., at least, belong to the Macabean times. Many would add a very large number to this, in fact, some find the second century B.C. the time of a great outburst of religious song, which produced most of the psalms we now possess. This seems to be going beyond the facts of the case.



That these were days of editorial activity, however, seems certain. Book I of the Psalms we have already discussed (p. 274). Books II and III form another unit exhibiting quite definite characteristics. It is an Elohist compilation and is nationalistic in its outlook. It is composed of three units, li-lxxii, assigned to David; xlii.-lxix., which are attributed to the sons of Korah; l., lxxiii.-lxxxiii., which bear the title to Asaph; and an appendix lxxxiv.-lxxxix., in which the name Yahweh is frequently used, and David, the sons of Korah, and Ethan are referred to in the superscriptions. Here, as in Book I, it is evident that the superscriptions are the work of editors, and they do not always convince us of infallibility. The "sons of Korah" cannot be taken as individual authorship. Korah and Asaph were leaders of the temple singing in the time of the chronicler (I Chr. xv. 16, 17; Ezra ii. 41), and the title here perhaps gives us a suggestion of the time when these two groups were compiled. Certainly some of the psalms that here have the title "to David" have historical experiences in the background, and express religious ideals that belong to centuries later than that of the great king (cf. Ps. li. 18-19; lxix. 33-36). While psalms such as lxxiv., lxxix., xliv. and others suggest authorship in the Maccabean times, it is possible that the groups that compose these two books were brought together in the early part of the Greek period, though we have neither internal nor external evidence that permits of any final judgment.

Books IV and V were the last collection and naturally include most of the latest psalms. None of them have musical terms attached, and most of them are anonymous. It has made use of earlier collections as cxx.-cxxxiv., which has been called the "little Psalter of the Pilgrims," and has included, no doubt, some that were centuries old (cf. cxxxvii., cxxvi.). Many were written expressly for temple worship and are of

a purely liturgical nature (cf. cxlvi.-cl.). Some are the outpouring of personal experience, which is scarcely surpassed anywhere in the Psalter (cf. xc., xci.). Most breathe an air of confidence that nothing could quench, and are in the most vital sense Messianic (cf. xciii., xcviii., xcix., cxxi., cxv., cx.). One chants the glories of nature, which is a Grecian rather than a Hebrew trait (civ.), while another rehearses the marvels in national history (cv.). The law is magnified as none but a spirit akin to the Chasidim could do, (cf. cxix.) and again vengeance is called down on all enemies (cf. cix., cxxix., xciv.). Yahweh alone is exalted and idols are nothing (cxv., cxxxv.). He is righteous, but also forgiving; everywhere, yet peculiarly near his people, these are the oft reiterated notes. It is not likely that these books were collected in their present form earlier than the middle of the second century B.C.

While they are more ritualistic and less personal than Book I, we have here a rich collection of songs, most of which are adapted to express the religious emotions of a congregation. The fact that the five books of psalms were used by the priestly party, of which the Pharisees were the leaders, helps us to believe that a deep spirituality and a profound religious experience was the possession of many who were most earnest in obeying the injunctions of the law.

#### *4. Apocalypticism*

Among the diverse literary products of this era apocalypticism is assuredly one of the most important. The weird, unreal world of Zephaniah i. 14-18, Ezekiel xxxvii.-xxxix., and Isaiah lix., lviii., takes on in a more marked degree the apocalyptic coloring in Isaiah xxiv.-xxvii. The feverishness that pervades this section is apocalyptic, though not all the forms are yet fully

developed. A terror of supernatural origin is about to break forth on the nations (Isa. xxiv. 1, 19; xxv. 6-8); symbols are used to conceal the meaning (Isa. xxvii. 1); last things form an important part of the hope (Isa. xxvi. 19-21); and Yahweh is about to celebrate his great sacrifice in Mount Zion (xxiv. 21-23; xxv. 6-8). The angelology (Isa. xxiv. 21; xxv. 4) and the idea of individual resurrection, which here appears for the first time in the Old Testament, are conceptions that belong most probably to the end of the Persian period. Many of the people are scattered abroad (Isa. xxvii. 12, 13), and those who are in Jerusalem are distressed and afflicted by strangers (Isa. xxv. 1-5; xxvi. 13), and are ruled over by priests (Isa. xxiv. 2). The idea of the resurrection of the individual Israelite is a distinct advance in the solution of the moral order of the world. Hitherto rewards and punishments belonged to this world. But many, as for example, Job, found it hard to reconcile this theory with the facts of experience. Sheol to the early Hebrews was but a dim underworld in which there was but feeble consciousness and no moral distinctions. Now comes some light, though there is immortality for the Israelite only and not for the heathen (Isa. xxvi. 19; cf. xxvi. 14).

The wealth of historical, literary, and theological material in this booklet points very definitely to an origin at the beginning of the Greek period. The sufferings of the people agree with the conditions in the closing years of the Persian dominancy. The convulsions that shook the world when Alexander marched against the eastern world-lords in 333 B.C. are reëchoed in many parts of the book. The evidence thus seems to point very definitely to the years 333-331 B.C. as the time of the writing of this vision.

A careful study of these chapters shows us that we have a lengthy apocalyptic poem, Isa. xxiv., xxv. 6-8;

xxvi. 20-21; xxvii. 1, 12, 13, which is a unit and should be read continuously. The remainder divides itself easily into a number of poems, in different meters, on different though somewhat related topics, xxv. 1-5, 9-21; xxvi. 1-19; xxvii. 2-5, 6-11. The message of the apocalypse is very simple and very comforting as well. Like all apocalyptic writing it was for people in distress. In lurid terms it declares that the enemies are going to be mercilessly destroyed and Israel, those in Egypt and those beyond the Euphrates, will be brought back so that they may worship in Jerusalem, and they shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the earth with fruit (Isa. xxvii. 12, 13). The main thought of the poems is very similar. It was voices such as these that steeled the hearts of the faithful to still trust in God through centuries of desolation.

Zechariah ix.-xiv. also is held by an ever-increasing number of students to belong to the Greek period. Language, thoughts, and historical allusion fit here as no other place. The Jews now have no king and are widely dispersed, though Egypt seems to be their chief rendezvous (Zech. x. 2, 10; xiv. 18, 19). Foreign rulers and heathen peoples have oppressed them (Zech. x. 3). The Greeks are actually mentioned in the present text and seem to be among the enemies (Zech. ix. 13). Jewish prisoners have actually been released, and further restoration is expected (Zech. ix. 11-16). A narrow legalism, intensely interested in feasts and sacrifices, pervades some of the sections (Zech. xiii. 1; xiv. 16-21). Prophets are no longer worthy spokesmen for Yahweh (Zech. xiii. 2). Apocalypticism is considerably developed (xii., xiv.), and no less determinative is the fact that the writers reveal a familiarity with the older Scriptures as Amos, Ezekiel, II Isaiah, Deuteronomy, and the Psalms. These are so laid under tribute as to suggest that

these chapters come from a period when Scripture was eagerly studied.

It is possible we have here the work of more than one author. We have two definite superscriptions, one in ix. 1 and the other xii. 1. We find two quite different outlooks, one hopeful, ix. 11—xi. 3, and the other pessimistic, xi. 4—17; xiii. 7—9. We have two types of literature, prophecy, ix. 1—xi. 17; xiii. 7—9, and apocalypticism, xii. 1—xiii. 6; xiv. 1—21. However, most of it seems to have originated in the closing decades of the third century B.C. The clemency of Ptolemy II to the Jews must have aroused great hopes among them. His successor, Ptolemy III (247—222 B.C.), was likewise their friend and is reported to have offered rich sacrifice at the Jerusalem temple. But when Joseph, the taxgatherer, gained power in 230 B.C., and Ptolemy IV came to the throne in 222 B.C., conditions changed, and the lot of the Jew was a most unhappy one. It seems probable that it was between 240 and 210 B.C. that an optimist, a pessimist, and an apocalypticist, each made an important contribution to the Old Testament literature.

The first division of the book, ix.—xi., to which should be added xiii. 7—9, which is foreign to its context but forms a perfect conclusion to this section, is easily interpreted. The neighboring nations are threatened with coming destruction, but Yahweh will encamp round about his house so that no oppressor shall pass through. Then the long promised kingdom, its center in Jerusalem, its boundaries those of ancient dreams or perhaps those of the empire of Alexander, its king, the teacher rather than the booted-warrior with blood-stained garments, riding on an ass not on a war charger, this, the hope of past centuries, is about to be realized (ix. 1—10). These verses correspond to the conditions and the hope that we have seen belonged to the days following the conquests of Alexan-



der. Then follows the declaration that prisoners have been liberated (cf. p. 282), others will soon gain their freedom, and a great conquest awaits them, for Yahweh will make Zion as the sword of a mighty man, and will punish those rulers that have been oppressive (ix. 11—xi. 3). It is to be noticed that the ideal has changed and now is that of the warrior and not that of the teacher (cf. ix. 13—15; x. 3—5). Following this optimistic outburst which we conceive to have been written in the days immediately following the benign policy of Ptolemy II and Ptolemy III, perhaps towards the middle of Ptolemy III's reign, we have one of great pessimism (xi. 4—17; xiii. 7—9). Joseph, the taxgatherer, and then his illegitimate son, Hyrcanus, were the representatives of Egypt, and the real rulers of Judea from 230 to 175 B.C., and Ptolemy IV had reversed the policy of his predecessors and had robbed, insulted, and degraded the Jews.

These are two parables, in which under the guise of a shepherd, the prophet plays the rôle of the king of Egypt. The first is that of Ptolemy IV, the careless shepherd (xi. 4—14). The Egyptian king has farmed out the flock to Joseph, and considers himself innocent as their own shepherds, Joseph and his minions, show no pity. Indeed, Yahweh has handed them over to slaughter, and no remedy seems to be in sight. The worth of such a shepherd as is the king of Egypt is but the price of a slave, is the cynical estimate of the writer (xi. 12). The second parable presents the same king as the worthless shepherd (xi. 15—17; xiii. 7—9). He does not look after the lost or seek the scattered, he only devours and tramples, and hence he shall be punished by sword and plague. The sheep shall be scattered, and only a remnant shall be saved.

The second section, xii. 1—xiii. 6; xiv. 1—20, belongs to approximately the same time as the last (210 B.C.),

or a little later. In these years Judah turned joyously to the Syrian kings, who were bearing down on Egypt, and who in 198 B.C. finally drove her out of Palestine. The chief elements of apocalypticism are found here. The nations are to be overthrown. Jerusalem will be in the center of the battle and will suffer grievously, but Yahweh himself will come with his host of angels, and shall conquer and then completely transform the city, and the whole earth shall be subject to him. He shall reign as king, all the pomp of ritual shall be established in the temple, and all the nations shall come up to Jerusalem for feast and sacrifice, or shall be annihilated. Surely this was a blaze of coming glory that consoled many to whom the régime of Joseph and his master, Ptolemy, permitted no comfort. Men and women, distraught by the merciless methods used for the iniquitous extortion, and degraded to the position of the lowest menials—only such could fail to shudder at the horrors this vision visited on the people (Zech. xiv. 12-15).

Daniel ii., vii.-xii. is a still more perfect piece of pure apocalyptic. It has, in fact, all the characteristics, and belongs to a very important body of writings, most of which have become accessible only during our own generation. More than a dozen such treatises, all pseudepigraphic, most of them narrating past history but using the future tense, thus putting well-known occurrences back into the lips of ancient worthies, all of them eschatological, and all bearing a remarkable resemblance to Daniel, were written after 200 B.C. We need not hesitate to follow the evidence in the book of Daniel, and believe that this book belongs to this larger group and was written between 167 and 165 B.C.

It was a most compelling message. Written during the Maccabean struggle, it gave in cryptic form a sketch of international events since the time of Nebuchadrezzar. In chapters ii., vii., viii. we have two

visions that are parallel and are easy of interpretation. The first kingdom symbolized by the golden head and the lion with eagle's wings is the Babylonian (Dan. ii. 36-38; vii. 4). The second, that symbolized by the silver breast and arms, and the bear with three ribs in its mouth, is the supposed kingdom of the Medes (Dan. ii. 39; vii. 5). The third kingdom is Persia, and is represented by the bronze belly and thighs, and the leopard with wings (Dan. ii. 39; vii. 6), while the iron legs and toes of the image, the beast with iron teeth and ten horns, and the goat with one horn followed by four others, out from which came the little horn, represents the Greek kingdom (Dan. ii. 40-43; vii. 7, 8; viii. 5-8).

Chapter xi. of Daniel is one of the most interesting as well as valuable in the book to the historian. In it we find a wealth of detail, that without using names or dates reveals a most intimate knowledge of much of the Syrian and Egyptian history from 336 B.C. down to 167 B.C. Only the careful study of this chapter with the aid of the best commentary can do justice to the writer, and convince us of the accuracy of his information. These visions and this history are but the prelude to the confidence that the author has ingeniously deduced from Jeremiah's seventy years, that "the end" is at hand. It seems that the idea in II Chronicles xxxvi. 21, "to fulfill the word of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed her sabbath," gave the key to the time of the end to the author. He concluded that the years were "week years," and that the end was already on the horizon (Dan. ix. 24). From the time of the cessation of the continual burnt offering on December 15, 168 B.C., it is only a time and times and a half time (vii. 25), or only 2300 evenings and mornings, that is 1150 days (viii. 14), until the worship of the temple will be restored. It was actually reinstated on December 25, 165 B.C. (cf. xii. 7, 11, 12).

This was the beginning of the end. We may be unable to locate the exact day on which the 1150, the 1290, and the 1335 days (xii. 11, 12) were by the author supposed to meet. The text may even have suffered an addition, but we cannot escape the conviction that the first readers expected the immediate realization of the promised kingdom.

The story of the divine deliverances of Daniel and his companions because of their loyalty to their religion, and this prediction of the coming kingdom, coupled with the fact that Judas Maccabeus was actually achieving triumphs more marvelous than legend could picture, all together must have called for a new loyalty and a more frenzied self-abandon in the cause of Judaism. It is no wonder that with literature like this read by eager people the armies of the Syrians should be driven back by the fury of the onslaught, the holy city should be taken from the enemy, the temple purified, and the sacrifice reestablished. An immediate end was achieved. Yahweh was proved able and willing to deliver his people, and faith in him was surely established in many a wavering mind.

A further purpose, however, was served by this book. It is apocalyptic, but it is no less legalistic. The author belonged also to that band of teachers who sought to turn many to righteousness (Dan. xii. 3; xi. 33). He was in sympathy with the "saints of the Most High" (Dan. vii. 18, 22, 25, 27) and with the holy people (Dan. xii. 7), and both of these terms hint at the existence of a group of separatists. The purification of the people (Dan. xii. 10), which could be attained only through fasting, keeping the commandments, observing the law of Moses, all of which were closely related to the temple worship (Dan. ix. 3-18), was the only means of deliverance. Hence the temple and the law were the *summum bonum* of true religion.

Like so much literature of this period, it also sug-

gested a solution for the sufferings of the holy people, and a reason for the delay of the promised redemption. The answer was twofold. The apostasy of the people, the lack of loyalty to the law lay in the background of the mind of the writer as in part the cause of the national tragedy. But like Plato, perhaps influenced by his philosophy which must have been widely studied at this time, he believed that the destiny of the nations of the earth was determined by forces in the spiritual world such as their representative angels (Dan. x. 13, 20, 21). Great warfare existed in heaven, and the angel of Persia was in conflict with the angel of the Jews, and delayed events on the earth; then the angel of Greece interfered, and the delay was continued (Dan. x. 13, 20; xii. 1).

To this rather inadequate solution, though indeed a logical deduction from its type of supernaturalism, that the supernatural hierarchies are finally responsible for national movements and human responsibility is shouldered off on the divine, was added the idea of a blessed immortality for the saints (Dan. xii. 2, 3). The solution of the moral problem of rewards and punishments, which had given so many earlier religious leaders real difficulty, producing practical atheism on the one hand, and the most vital faith on the other, was now pushed over into the next world, and the idea of rewards and punishments in the future life was accepted. From early days the Hebrews believed in a future existence, but it was shadowy, bloodless, and non-moral, now it was transformed into a moral world. The faith of those who were martyrs for their religion helped to light up the dark beyond to all generations (cf. II Mac. vi. 18—vii. 42).

And "the time of the end," what of it? The writer who knew events so accurately from 300 B.C. down to 167 B.C. finds his way forward with very faltering step. The temple worship was restored, but not in the 1150



days, or the 1290 days, or the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years predicted (Dan. viii. 14; xii. 11; ix. 27). Antiochus, of course, died, but neither how nor when the writer believed he should (Dan. xi. 40-45). No doubt there were evidences that Antiochus was gathering a force by which he might avenge himself on the Egyptians (Dan. xi. 40-43), but affairs in the east attracted him, and history knows of no attack on Egypt after 168 B.C. No doubt it would have been the correct thing in a world of law and order that Antiochus should have set up his tent between the "sea and the glorious holy mountain," and that there, the center of his infamy, he "should come to his end." Historical facts do not always follow the pathway of theoretic justice, and in this case we know that the culprit died in Tabae in the land of Persia (I Mac. vi. 5-17).

Victories were gained by the Jews, but the price was terrific, and neither was the enemy subdued, nor did the kingdom come. The forty years of the high-priesthood under Simon and John Hyrcanus (143-105 B.C.) were the only possible approximation to it. Then the fortunes of the Jews waned more and more till their final eclipse in 70 A.D. These hopes, built on a literal interpretation of the ancient, prophetic messages and looking for a material kingdom, never materialized, but a kingdom of justice and good will, of peace and love, a world-wide kingdom is slowly fulfilling the spirit of those ancient hopes.

### *5. The Relation to Greek Culture and Life*

The narrow, legalistic group was perhaps the most intense if not the largest in these days. There were many, however, who were not apostates to the true religion, who were most kindly disposed towards many of the Greek people, as well as to some aspects of the new culture. The diaspora, who had close social and

business contacts with the Greeks, learned from experience that they were not all bad nor were their ways all unrighteous. They had to concede that "a good Greek was better than a bad Jew." So, unconsciously, much of the Greek thought must have been absorbed by those who were in daily contact with their masters.

*Proselytizing*—If knowledge of the Greek brought with it a healthy respect for the man, knowledge of his religion taught the Jew the value of his own. This kindled anew the missionary flame in many hearts. The Babylonian captivity had intensified an earlier sense of obligation to other nations, and the writer of the "Servant Songs" had been the great exponent of this ideal. During the Persian period we hear now and then a voice that was conscious that "my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." But the logical outcome of the ideal, and the ability to put it into practice, did not fully arrive till the wide dispersion of Jews in the Greek era. Now a holy enthusiasm stirred many to impart the sacred truths of their religion to the Gentile. The response was gratifying. The doctrine of the unity of God, the practice of sabbath rest and assembly, the freedom from ritual everywhere outside of Jerusalem, and the appeal to the written word, together with the liberty that was granted to proselytes, made a strong appeal to many high-minded Greeks.

*The Septuagint*—Two important works contributed to this movement, and in part were the product of it. The Septuagint stands first. This was the work of Alexandrian Jews. The translation of the Pentateuch was first undertaken and that not earlier than 250 B.C. The other books were translated later, at different times by various scholars. The whole was completed perhaps not earlier than 100 B.C. It served a twofold purpose. It gave many Jews, who by this time had

lost the use of the Hebrew language, access to the Scriptures in their vernacular. It is believed, however, that the missionary motive was not absent from the scheme. Certain characteristic features, as the omission of marked anthropomorphisms, would help to make it attractive to the Greek mind. At any rate, throughout much of the Greek domain, if not indeed in Palestine itself, it must have been a most important ally in this propaganda.

*Jonah*—To this may be added that which is recognized to be the most definitely missionary book in the canon, the book of Jonah. The date of its writing is difficult to determine, but as a call to a missionary service it is worthy of a leading place in such an undertaking. Indeed it does double duty, for as a protest against an unwholesome racial intolerance it must have ministered a rebuke to the growing Jewish legalism.

The literary form is picturesque and imaginative, but no more so than much of the Oriental literature. In the form of a simple story, in which an element of the marvelous adds to the fascination, a profound religious truth is so told that none but the dullest can fail to remember it and be impressed. To Judaism it had an immediate application, hence the grip of the theme it illustrated. In *Jonah* the nation was personified, and national history was interpreted in the guise of his experiences. Yahweh, because of his revelation to them, had called his people to a great missionary service, but they had failed to respond. He had punished them by the captivity. When they had repented he had rescued them, and had again commissioned them to be the light to the Gentiles. This they had most reluctantly undertaken, but even in the most unexpected places many had repented and accepted Yahweh. The two vital principles of religion so pointedly stated in the book, *viz.*, the world-wide

missionary obligation of the people of God, and the loving care of God over even the most hated alien, have unfortunately often been obscured by our effort to reduce poetry to prose and Oriental imagery to history. The basis of the story lies in a religious conception that is more valid than any mere historical occurrence could be.

Greek ideas and outlook, however, captured some of the Jews. The Greeks were the philosophers of the world, and this was the age of reflection. The Jews were more interested in morals than in abstract thought, yet they could not all escape the atmosphere in which they breathed. As their national hopes had waned, the ideal of a religious community had gained the ascendancy. They were fast becoming a nation of teachers, and thus they could not ignore, even if they wished to, the current thought of their masters. Not only had they learned the language of their conquerors, but not a few of their philosophic conclusions had become their possession. Books such as *Ecclesiasticus*, the *Wisdom of Solomon*, the *Psalms of Solomon*, and many of the apocalyptic visions written by the Jews from 200 B.C. on, show decided traces of the subtle influences of Greek speculation and ideals.

*Proverbs*—The book of *Proverbs*, which in many ways shows the influences of Greek age, belongs to the "Wisdom literature" of the Hebrews. This type was very ancient, in the Old Testament going back at least as early as Jotham and Samson. By the time of Jeremiah there was a class of more or less importance who, because of their use and mastery of this literary method, were known as the "Wise" (*Jer.* xviii. 18). In the prophets we find not a few passages that may be rightly called wisdom literature (*e.g.*, *Mic.* ii. 1-4; *vi.* 6-8; *Isa.* v. 1-5; *xxviii.* 23-29; *Jer.* xxxi. 21; *Ezek.* xvi. 24; *xix.* 2-9, etc.).

But as we read the present collection, one of the



first things we note is the exceedingly few references we can find to nomadic, pastoral, or even agricultural life (Prov. xi. 26; xii. 10; xxvii. 23-27). This is strange, as agriculture remained the chief industry of the majority of the people until the time of the captivity. Commerce is, however, the language of the book, and apparently the large majority of the proverbs originated when all the joys and sorrows, the rewards as well as the accompanying evils of world trade, were the commonplaces of the national life (Prov. x. 15; xi. 28; xii. 2; xiv. 20; xiii. 22; xix. 1; xxii. 2, etc.). This suggests a period long after the time of Solomon for the completion of the book.

But the ethical and the religious assumptions are even more startling. The ethical emphasis of the eighth-century prophets has now become the axiom of conduct. Monogamy is unquestioned. The monotheism of II Isaiah is assumed. The individualism of Jeremiah is an established principle, and the peculiarly Jewish accent has been lost in the note of the universal. The call to the pursuit of wisdom and the implied existence of schools belongs essentially to the days of Greek rule. Yet the "wise men" cling tenaciously to the Deuteronomic orthodoxy that the "good" must be the prosperous and the "wicked" must suffer.

Even more conclusive in determining the date is the fact of language. Hebrew vocabulary and structure are very similar to that of Ecclesiasticus (200 B.C.), and if language has a history it belongs to essentially the same period. Thus all lines converge in one direction, *viz.*, that our present book has not only been enriched by men who lived in the post-exile period, but for the collection as a whole we are likely greatly indebted to the Greek age. No doubt many had been handed on from the ancient past (*e.g.*, Prov. xiv. 35; xvi. 10, 12-15; xx. 2, 8, 26, 28; xxii. 11, that refer to



the king, most naturally come from the days of the kings), but the bulk of proverbs as well as the collecting of them would seem to come from post-exile, even from Grecian days.

The book consists of a number of collections. Proverbs xxv.—xxix. and x.—xxii. 16 seem to be the two earliest books. Proverbs xxii. 17—xxiv. perhaps came later, and xxiv. 23–34 is a still later appendix. Proverbs xxx.—xxxi., along with i. 7—ix., shows still more of the influence of Greek environment.

It thoroughly approves of the man who is energetic in business and shrewd enough to drive a good bargain. It is utilitarian rather than altruistic, and expresses the commercial enterprise the Jew manifested with his Greek neighbors. Yet it links good business up with religion, "the fear of Yahweh is the beginning of knowledge."

*Proverbs i.—ix.*—The first division, Proverbs i.—ix., is the introduction to the other collections, and is the work of the Greek period. Schools of instruction were prevalent throughout the land (Prov. ii. 1; iii. 1; iv. 1), the call to reflection, or to seek wisdom was insistent (Prov. i. 2–6; ii. 2; iii. 13; iv. 7–9), and the sins to be avoided were those that the Jews met in their fiercest forms during these years (cf. Prov. i. 13, 19; ii. 16; iii. 7, 25; iv. 24; v. 3, 4; vi. 1, 16–19, 23–26; vii. 5–23; ix. 13–18). It is an essay rather than a collection of proverbs, and unites the old orthodoxy, that it pays to be good (cf. Prov. ii. 20–22; iii. 1, 2, 9–10; iv. 10), with the new ideal, that the search after wisdom, or the fear of God, is the only thing worth while (Prov. ii. 1–11; iii. 13–18; iv. 5–9). Its tone is universal rather than racial, and ethical rather than legal. It is an admirable effort to put Jewish morals and religion into Greek philosophy.

*Wisdom*—"Wisdom" is greatly honored by a number of wise men. Four chapters should be compared. Job

xxviii. concludes that wisdom is known to God alone. Ecclesiasticus xxiv. says that wisdom took up her abode in Israel alone. Proverbs viii. 1-31 presents wisdom as the companion of God from the beginning, and as appealing to mankind to receive her instruction, while in the Wisdom of Solomon (Wisd. Sol. vii.-viii.), she is "alone in kind," "the breath of the power of God, and the clear effulgence of his glory." These chapters, by an assimilation more or less complete of the Greek *logos* idea have brought a transcendent God into a living relation with the world, and have prepared the way, in part at least, for the *logos* idea of the New Testament.

*Proverbs xxx. 1-4*—The "words of Agur" are those of an agnostic (Prov. xxx. 1-4). He confesses he has no knowledge, or wisdom, or understanding. He is indeed brutish. Then he turns swiftly, and skeptically asks, perhaps in the face of a good deal of dogmatism, who is there who knows anything about the heavens, or the wind, or the waters, or the earth?

This and i.-ix. seem to be the latest sections in the book. It is very probable that all the present book was brought together as a whole, about the same time as the kindred work of Ecclesiasticus, that is, shortly after the opening of the second century B.C.

*Ecclesiastes*—Ecclesiastes shows, if not something of the Greek spirit, then something of the spirit of the age. The "preacher," if style and content indicate the time of the composition, wrote in the Greek period, perhaps about 200 B.C., what he conceived might have been the judgment of a man with the broad experience of Solomon (Ecc. i. 12). Yet the world on which the author looked was far other than that of Solomon. Injustice was prevalent (Ecc. iii. 16; iv. 1; v. 8), a boy had become a king (Ecc. iv. 13-16; ix. 14; x. 16), and a corrupt government ruled the land (Ecc. x. 20). It was a blasé old world in which there was nothing new,

a world full of books that were very tedious and dry (Ecc. xii. 12).

The substratum of the book has as its theme, "life is scarcely worth while, yet as one must live, it is good to live not overintensely; eat, drink, rejoice, get good, but do all in moderation." It is in spirit closely akin to Stoicism, the noblest philosophy of Greece during those centuries.

Throughout the book we find a series, or rather two series, of brief passages that redeem it from its practical pessimism. The earliest and the least important passages have apparently come from the pen of a scribe interested in proverbial wisdom (Ecc. iv. 5; v. 3; vii. 1a, 3, 5, 6-9, 11, 12, 19; viii. 1; ix. 17, 18; x. 1-3, 8-14a, 15, 18, 19). The other passages, in the accents of a pious lover of the law, challenge the reader to "fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecc. ii. 26; iii. 17; vii. 18b, 26b, 29; viii. 5, 11-13; xi. 9b; xii. 1a. 13-14).

The earliest writer, a pessimist, it is true, was one who was willing to face life at its worst, and play the game, though not very strenuously. He sounded a rather somber note, but it appealed to many as a true interpretation of real life. He was a healthy prototype of Omar Khayyam. But to many his booklet must have seemed open to the charge of irreligion. It lacked both passion and faith. The later writers redeemed it from any accusation of impiety or irreligion.

*Song of Solomon*—The Song of Solomon may also have found its way into the canon, as a concession to the Greek spirit. This little book, which had the greatest difficulties in gaining canonical standing, and then was prohibited to all under thirty years of age, was for long centuries interpreted by the christian church as an allegory of Christ and the church, his bride. This treatment is now fast losing ground.

Study of Syrian literature since 1873 has brought to the western world a knowledge of Oriental marriage customs and a number of Syrian love songs that throw a new light on this collection. Syrian marriages usually took place in March, and the bridal couple celebrated their "bridal week" as king and queen, receiving the homage of their friends and being the center of the week's festivities. Many are to-day convinced that we have in the Song of Solomon a collection of pure love songs that were used on such occasions. A similar theme is celebrated in Psalm xlv. These love songs revel in the beauties of nature, in the physical charms of the bride, in the strength of the bridegroom, in the delights of the dance, and the raptures of love. They offer us a glimpse of humanism in the midst of puritanism. They show that the Jew as well as the Greek could love the beautiful in the physical form and in nature, but here, at least, he did not let it sink to the lewd and the coarse. If some phrases offend our ears, we should compare them with other Oriental love songs to help us appreciate their purity and delicacy. That human love, glorying in monogamy and redeemed from lust, placing the humble home of the peasant on a higher level than the harem of Solomon, should be celebrated in our Scriptures is not out of accord with the teachings of the Master, who made the home the center of religion and life.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON

*The Law or the Pentateuch*—In our study we have already seen how certain portions of our Old Testament became authoritative. In the time of Moses there was a covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel. A decalogue, most likely found in the ethical commands in Ex. xx. 1–17, may contain the prescriptions which the nation bound itself to keep. In 621 B.C. the people pledged themselves to keep all the words of the book of the covenant, and canonized Deuteronomy (II Kgs. xxii., xxiii.). In the time of Ezra (cir. 398 B.C.) there was a further reform, and the people deliberately accepted the nucleus of P. as their law. General usage, apart from any demonstration on the part of the people or formal decree of any ecclesiastical body, must by common consent have canonized the whole of the Pentateuch sometime during the fourth century B.C., perhaps before the beginning of the Greek period.

*The Prophets*—The second division of the canon, that is, the prophets, former prophets, Joshua, Judges I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and the latter prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve, must also have been the result of a gradual process. Ezekiel, so far as we know, was the only book against which objections were raised. This was due to the fact that its legislation failed in a good many respects to agree with the laws in the Pentateuch. How the books were preserved, who collected them, and when



they were collected, are historical questions to which only very indefinite answers can be given. The intrinsic worth of the books is the best evidence of their canonicity. This impelled the scribes and the late teachers to preserve them and give them the place of authority they merited.

In Ecclesiasticus mention is made of all the historical characters who are outstanding in the "former prophets," while Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve prophets are also well known (Ecclus. xlii.-xlix.). This indicates that most, if not all, the books of the second canon were in existence and were held in general esteem by the religious leaders in the early decades of the second century B.C. It is quite unlikely that the collection was completed much before this time, as parts of some of the books, as Zechariah and Isaiah, had not long been written. Nor is it likely that it was "open" much later than this, or a book like Daniel, that must have been popular, would likely have gained an entrance thereto. We cannot be more definite than to consider the decades around 200 B.C. as the probable date of the close of the canon of the prophets.

*The Writings*—The third division is known as the "Writings," and includes Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Esther, and Daniel. This comes last, and is the most indefinite of all. Esther, Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes barely escaped being considered apocryphal. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the Rabbinical council, which met at Jamnia in 90 A.D. and again in 118 A.D. respectively, labored as to the boundaries between the canonical and the apocryphal writings. All books in the above list, were finally accepted officially in 118 A.D. It seems curious, perhaps it is a commentary on the attitude of the New Testament writers,

that no one of these disputed books is referred to in the New Testament. If this third canon was not finally "closed" until the end of the first century of the christian era, we may nevertheless be sure that for all practical purposes, its bounds had been pretty clearly defined by the beginning of the first century B.C. Many Psalms had long been in use in the worship in the temple. Proverbs in many cases found their roots in the soil of the ancient past, and were the commonplaces of every-day speech long before they found their way into the present compilation. Job was a book that must have been appreciated when it first saw the light, and it is unthinkable that any age should fail to give it a place of honor in its religious literature. Chronicles and Ezra and Nehemiah were the repositories of priestly history and custom, and must have been held as authoritative by all those who were interested in the ritual from the time of their composition. So with the other books, their intrinsic value won for them a place in the minds and the hearts of many people, and hence they were grouped together in the third canon.

As we review these three divisions of the canon, we cannot agree with a Rabbinical tradition that they represent three different grades of inspiration, the Law possessing a higher degree of inspiration than the Prophets, which in turn possesses a higher quality than the Writings. They represent, rather, different stages of collecting and canonizing the individual divisions. Each group represents the crystallization of a definite religious movement, and all together preserve for us the story of those religious struggles and ideals that, because of their universal and spiritual appeal to the consciences of men, proclaim themselves to be the word of God.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART  
FOR  
OLD TESTAMENT LIFE AND LITERATURE

The value of definite mile-posts in history is known to all. The difficulties of setting these up in Old Testament literature is fully appreciated only by those who make bold to achieve it. With such a wealth of material, the product of so many centuries and of so many schools of thought, and frequently with so much ignorance concerning the minutiae of the various currents of life, no one would assert that it is possible to arrange all the literature in its assured historical setting.

Yet some order is better than none. Where the traditional dates are possible, which is so for a major part of our literature, these have been followed. Where the language, content and spirit of a passage or a book are completely out of accord with such, then what has seemed to be the preponderance of evidence has been accepted. True, a good many messages may be interpreted almost equally well in two or more, sometimes widely separated periods. Hence, even when guided by the balance of probabilities, there sometimes remains a degree of uncertainty. It has not been deemed wise to constantly indicate this, either by the use of the interrogation mark or by repetition. It is believed that most of the subdivisions of the literature can be interpreted adequately only in the period to which they have been assigned. Also, even when the date is problematic, all the material has a significant message where placed.

The writer is indebted to a vast host of interpreters for the critical material on which the judgments are based. In the chart there is nothing that is new. Most of it follows the consensus of christian scholarship. It is here outlined only as a usable not as an infallible guide.

OLD TESTAMENT OF LIFE AND LITERATURE  
CHRONOLOGICAL CHART



# OLD TESTAMENT LIFE AND LITERATURE

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE
10000 B.C.	Palestine inhabited before 10000 by non-Semitic people of early stone age. These followed by men of the late stone age.	
4000		
3000		
2500	Amorite immigration gains the highlands, slowly spreads through the valleys, down to the coast cities.	
2000		
1900	Abraham a part of this movement.	
1600	All Syria tributary to Egypt, 1580-1350.	
1400	Habiri overrunning the land. Asheru clan settled in the north. Hittites conquer upper Syria, 1350.	
1300	Hittites extend south and contend with Egypt. Treaty in 1271 with Ramses, leaves most of Syria in possession of the Hittites.  A clan called Israel reported in south of Palestine in 1222 by Merneptah.	

# CHRONOLOGICAL CHART

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Babylonia-Assyria</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
	Civilization in Euphrates valley running back, into far centuries.		10000 B.C.
	City states in S. Babylonia preceding 5000.	Two great kingdoms, upper and lower Egypt before 4000.	4000
	Kingdom of Ur before 4000.	Mining in Sinai.	
	Rivalry between cities, Ur, Erech, Kish from 4000-3000.	Old kingdom, 2980-2475.	3000
	Sargon I, king of Summer and Akkad, 2850.	Pyramid building.	
	Naram-Sin, 2700, king of the four corners of the world.		2500
	Amorite immigration and conquest. First Babylonian dynasty 2225-1926.	Middle kingdom, 2160-1788.	
	Hammurabi, 2123-2081, sixth king of the dynasty. Code of laws compiled.		2000
	Assyria an offshoot. City of Ashur founded.		
Arameans in north Mesopotamia. Hittites in north Syria.	Assyria independent. Wars with Babylon.	Oldest edition of Book of the Dead. In power, the prophet of social justice and the "good shepherd."	1900
		Hyksos, Semitic shepherd kings rule Delta, 1675-1575. Driven out by Ahmose I, founder of New kingdom, 1680-1150.	1700
			1600
Hittite kingdom at Boghaz-koi, 1500.		Amarna tablets from the reigns of Amenophis III. and IV show upheaval in Palestine.	1400
		Ikhnaton (Amenophis IV) the heretic king, 1375-1358.	1300
		Ramses II, 1292-1225. Built the border cities Ramses and Pithom. Pharaoh of oppression.	

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE														
	Exodus of important body of Jacob clans from Egypt in 1220. Moses the leader.	Stories of ancestors and clan experiences and customs preserved orally.														
1200	Hebrews in the wilderness. Sinai experiences. Kadesh-Barnea their chief center.  Enter Canaan from the east 1180. Leah tribes occupy south. Rachel tribes under Joshua the middle and the concubine clans the north.  Period of the judges, 1180-1040. Judges had local influence. A number may have been contemporary, judging in different tribes. Canaanites defeated.	New decisions necessary. Ten words Ex. xx. 1-17. ?  Songs, proverbs and tales perhaps all oral. Jgs. v, ix, xiv. 14, 15. Customs changing. Laws of the Canaanites naturally coming unto use.														
1100	Canaanites gradually driven back. Much assimilation of the two peoples going on. Moabites, Midianites, Ammonites defeated. Gideon offered the kingship. Abimelech king in Shechem three years. Philistine conflict. Saul, king in Benjamin, 1040-1013 ? Other tribes united. Ammonites, Philistines, Amalekites defeated. Strife with David and Samuel. Defeated finally by Philistines.	Schools of the prophets formed. Songs martial and religious composed and sung.														
1000	David King over Judah 1013-973 ? Tributary to Philistines. Conflict with the house of Saul. Conquered. Jerusalem taken and made the capital. Philistines defeated. Boundaries extended. Kingdom organized. Rebellions of closing years. Solomon king, 973-933. Executions. Commerce extended on land and sea. Building program. Palaces and temple. International relations. Tyre and Egypt.	Court records for first time after Jerusalem capital. David's laments composed. II Sam. i. 19-27; iii. 33-34; xviii. 3. Nucleus of religious lyrics? Ps. xviii and others? Nathan's parable II Sam. xii. 1-4, oral. Laws made I Sam. xxx. 24-25. Solomon's dedication hymn, I Kgs. viii. 12, 13. Gen. xlix. 1-27; Ex. xv. 1-18; Nu. xxiii. 7-xxiv. 19.														
933	DIVIDED MONARCHY															
	<table><tr><th>Israel</th><th>Judah</th></tr><tr><td>to</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Jeroboam I, 933-915.</td><td>Rehoboam, 933-920.</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>Abijah, 920-917.</td></tr><tr><td>Nadab, 915-913.</td><td>Asa, 917-876.</td></tr><tr><td>Baasha, 913-889.</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Elah, 889-887.</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Warfare between the two kingdoms. Sheshonk invaded both, pillaged Jerusalem in 929. Syria invited by Asa, attacked the north, gained northern cities, opened 100 years' war about 890. North returns to primitive religion. South, reform under Asa.</p>	Israel	Judah	to		Jeroboam I, 933-915.	Rehoboam, 933-920.		Abijah, 920-917.	Nadab, 915-913.	Asa, 917-876.	Baasha, 913-889.		Elah, 889-887.		Hero stories of judges, and Saul in circulation. Biographies of David and Solomon in process of formation. Judicial decisions of judges accumulating.
Israel	Judah															
to																
Jeroboam I, 933-915.	Rehoboam, 933-920.															
	Abijah, 920-917.															
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## CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Babylonia-Assyria</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
<p>Philistines in Palestine, 1170. Entering from the west.</p> <p><i>Greece</i>                      <i>Syria</i></p> <p>Trojan war, 1194-1184. In Greece, stories of the Trojan war and doings of Achilles sung.</p>	<p>Nebuchadrezzar I of Babylon reaches coast of Mediterranean, 1140-1123.</p>	<p>Merneptah, 1225-1215. Campaign in Palestine. "Israel" among the defeated clans. Pharaoh of the exodus? Egypt rapidly declines.</p> <p>Egyptian decadence, 1150-663.</p> <p>Sheshonk, 945-924, raided Palestine. Spoiled the temple.</p>	<p>1200</p> <p>900</p>
<p>Beginnings of the Iliad, 900.</p> <p>Benhadad I captured cities in north Israel, Ijon, Dan, Maacah, Galilee and Naphthali, 890.</p>	<p>Assyrian chronological lists exact from 893 to 666, still preserved.</p>		

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE
887	<div> <div>Zimri, 887.</div> <div>Omri, 887-875.</div> <div>Ahab, 875-853.</div> <div>Ahaziah, 853-851.</div> <div>Jehoram, 851-842.</div> </div> <div> <div>Jehoshaphat, 876-843.</div> <div>Ahaziah, 843-842.</div> </div> <p>Omri developed the country. Peace between north and south. Tyre, an ally of Israel. Samaria made the capital. Moab tributary. Conflict with Syria.</p> <p>Ahab continues same policy. Alliance with Judah. Syria worsted in battle. Syria, Israel and allies meet Assyrian army at Karkar in 854. Syria worsted Israel, 853.</p>	<p>Much literary activity.</p> <p>Law codes being compiled. Ex. xxxiv. 14-26. Ex. xxi-xxiii.</p> <p>J. document, story of patriarchs and early tribal history from beginning to entrance into Canaan, near completion, 850.</p>
842	<div> <div>Jehu, 842-814.</div> <div>Jehoahaz, 814-797.</div> <div>Jehoash, 797-781.</div> <div>Jeroboam II, 781-740.</div> </div> <div> <div>Athaliah, 842-836.</div> <div>Joash, 836-796.</div> <div>Amaziah, 796-782.</div> <div>Azariah, 782-751.</div> <div>Jotham, 751-735.</div> </div> <p>Jehu opened a half century of national disaster. He massacred the royal seed of both Israel and Judah, and slaughtered the priests of Baal. Paid tribute to Assyria in 842. Gilead and Gad were devastated by Syria. Joash of Judah had to bribe Hazael of Syria by temple treasure.</p> <p>Jehoash of Israel introduced a half-century of prosperity. Defeated Syria, 797. Defeated Amaziah and breached walls of Jerusalem.</p> <p>Jeroboam II drove Syria out of the land.</p> <p>Peace between Judah and Israel.</p>	<p>Book of Jashar, war songs. Josh. x. 12-13; II Sam. i. 19-27; perhaps II Sam. iii. 33-34; Jgs. v.</p> <p>Wars of Yahweh. Nu. xxi. 14-15; perhaps Nu. xxi. 27-30. Ex. xv. 1-18.</p> <p>Early book of Judges, iii. 6—xvi. 31; xvii—xxi.</p> <p>E. document completed.</p> <p>Ej. (Elijah stories). I Kgs. xvii-xix; xxi; II Kgs. i. 2-17.</p> <p>Es. (Elisha stories). II Kgs. ii; iv. 1—vi. 23, viii. 1-15, xiii. 14-21.</p> <p>Political narratives. I Kgs. xx; xxii; II Kgs. iii. 4-27; vi. 24—vii. 20; ix, x.</p> <p>Amos i-ix. 8.</p>
740	<div> <div>Zechariah, 740.</div> <div>Shallum, 740-738.</div> <div>Menahem, 738-736.</div> <div>Pekabiah, 736-734.</div> <div>Pekah, 734-732.</div> <div>Hoshea, 732-722.</div> </div> <div> <div>Jotham, 751-735.</div> <div>Ahaz, 735-715.</div> </div> <p>Days of anarchy. Four of these six kings of Israel were murdered.</p> <p>Menahem paid tribute to Assyria 738.</p> <p>Israel and Syria combined against Ahaz of Judah in 734. He called in Tiglath-Pileser, giving tribute.</p> <p>Assyria came, took Damascus in 732 and spoiled Gilead, deporting many. Ahaz reconstructed temple on Assyrian model.</p> <p>Samaria besieged by Assyria 724-722 and captured.</p> <p>Deportation of 27,290.</p> <p>Colonists introduced into Samaria.</p>	<p>Hosea i-xiv. completed before 735.</p> <p>Isaiah began his ministry 737.</p> <p>Sermons from 737-732. Isa. ii—iv. 1; v. 1-7; vi-viii, ix. 9—x. 4; v. 25-30; xvii. 1-11; v. 8-24.</p> <p>Sermons from 727-722.</p> <p>Isa. xiv. 28-32, xxviii. 1-4; xxiii. 1-14.</p> <p>Sermons 711.</p> <p>Isa. xv; xvi. 1-14; xvii. 12-14; xx. 1-6; xxi. 13-37.</p>
722	<div> <div>Ahaz, 735-715.</div> <div>Hezekiah, 715-686.</div> </div> <p>Hezekiah was a good king. Judah gained considerable strength. Siloam tunnel was constructed. The temple was purified and a reform in religion carried out. Assyrian and pagan idolatry banned. Alliance with Egypt and the smaller states and revolt against Assyria in 705. Merodach-baladin usurper of Babylonia encouraged revolt. Jerusalem sieged in 701, heavy tribute paid, 46 cities captured, deportation.</p>	<p>Sermons 701.</p> <p>Isa. i. 1-31; x. 5-19, 24-32; xviii. 1-6; xxii. 1-4, 15-25; xxviii. 7-20; xxix. 1-16; xxx. 1-17; xxxi. 1-4.</p> <p>Micah i-iii. v. 10-14; vi. 9-16; vii. 1-6; vi. 6-8.</p>



CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Babylonia-Assyria</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
<p>Mesha, king of Moab, gained freedom from Ahab 850. Moabite stone celebrates the victory.</p>			887
<p>Hazael king of Syria, 843-790 (?) plunders northern Israel and east of Jordan.</p>	<p>Shalmaneser II, 860-825. Assyrian king at Karkar, 854 met Syria and her allies and claimed victory. Between 849 and 839 launched four great campaigns against Damascus, thus interfering with her attacks on Israel.</p>		842
<p>Suffers severely from Assyria in 803 and 797. Defeated by Israel. Greek history begins, writing of the Odyssey beginning.</p>	<p>Adad-Nirari III, 812-783, king of Assyria. Two campaigns against Damascus, 803, 797.</p>		
<p>Benhadad king of Syria, 790-755 (?) Defeated by Jeroboam II.</p>	<p>Ashur-Dan III, 773-755, king of Assyria. Two campaigns against Damascus, 773 and 765. Tiglath-Pileser III, 745-727. Assyria makes war on Damascus and Israel in 738 and 734.</p>		
<p>Rezon of Syria attacked Jerusalem 734 Damascus sieged by Tiglath-Pileser 734, captured 732, and kingdom ceased.</p>	<p>Assyria exacted tribute from Menahem in 738. Captured Damascus, 732, conquered and deported from north Israel and east of Jordan. Shalmaneser IV, 727-722. Assyria. Campaign against Syria and Palestine 725. Samaria sieged 724, captured 722 in beginning of Sargon II (722-705) reign. Sargon II deported Samaria and colonized. Rebellion quelled in Hamath, Arpad, Damascus, Samaria, Gaza, Ashdod, and Egypt defeated at Raphia in 720.</p>		
	<p>Rebellion of Ashdod and Philistine cities suppressed in 711. Sennacherib, 705-681. Rebellion of Hezekiah, Phœnicia, Moab, Ammon, Philistine cities quelled. Jerusalem sieged. Egypt defeated 701.</p>	<p>Shabako (So ?) King of Egypt, 712-700.</p>	720
			701

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE
689	<p>Sennacherib attack on Jerusalem?</p> <p>Manasseh, 686-641. Amon, 641-639.</p> <p>Manasseh was a vassal of Assyria. He sent building material to Nineveh for the royal palace and soldiers with the Assyrian army invading Egypt. Religiously he was pro-Assyrian and carried on a vigorous persecution against Yahwism.</p>	<p>Psalms iii; xx; xxi; xxviii. Proverbs, a nucleus of xxv.-xxix. collected? J. E. documents united during the early decades of this century.</p> <p>No prophets were speaking; no literature was made public, so far as we know during this reign. Possible that Dt. xii-xix. xxviii. was written at this time, if not earlier.</p>
639	<p>Josiah, 639-608. Good king Josiah came to the throne as a boy. The kingdom was too small to play a part in world-politics.</p>	<p>Zeph. i. about 630, the time of dread of the approaching Scythians. Jer. ii-vi (from 626-621). Jer. xi-xii. 6 (621).</p>
621	<p>The Dt. reform in 621. Temple cleansed. Made only place for worship. High places destroyed. Dt. made authoritative.</p>	
608	<p>Josiah slain by the Egyptians in the battle of Megiddo.</p> <p>Jehoahaz, 608. Jehoiakim, 608-597. Jehoiakin, 597. Zedekiah, 597-586. Judah was now a vassal to Egypt. Jehoahaz was deposed by Necho and Jehoiakim was made king of Jerusalem. Heavy tribute was levied. In 605 Judah again the spoil of war became the vassal of Babylonia.</p>	<p>Zeph. ii. 1-7, 12-15; iii. 1-7. (608). Nah. i. 11, 14; ii. 1, 3-13; iii. 1-19. Jer. vii.-viii. 22.</p> <p>First edition of book of Jeremiah (604). Most likely included: Jer. i. 4-ix. 26; x. 17-xii. 6; xiv. 1-xvii. 18; xxii. 10-19. Narratives referring to these times. Jer. xxv, xxxvi, xlv. Hab. i-ii. Chp. iii, a psalm later.</p>
601	<p>Tribute was withheld, and allies of Babylon raided the country.</p>	<p>Jer. xviii. 1-xx. 18; xiii. 1-7 (601). Book of Deuteronomy completed. First edition of I, II Kings.</p>
597	<p>Nebuchadrezzar sieged the city, took it, spoiled the temple and took 10,000 of the princes captive.</p>	<p>Jer. xxii. 24-50; xii. 7-17; xxiv. 1-10; xxvii, xxix, xxxv; Mic. iv. 9-10 (597). Jer. xxiii. 9-40; xxviii, li. 59-64 (593); Ezek. i-xxiii (592-1); Ezek. xxiv-xxix. 16; Jer. xxi. 1-14; xxxii-xxxiv; xxxvii-xxxix (588-586). Jer. xl-xliv; Ezek. xxx-xxxix (582). Lam. ii, iv.</p>
588	<p>Revolt by Zedekiah, alliance with Egypt. Nebuchadrezzar came, city taken in 586, razed and second captivity.</p>	<p>Ps. xviii, xxvii, lxi, lxiii, lxxii, xlv, xlvii, xlviii. Referring to a king who seems to be historic and not a foreigner, belong before the exile chiefly.</p>
586	<p>Gedaliah, the new governor, murdered with some of the Babylonian guard by Ishmael. Many fled to Egypt.</p>	

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Babylonia-Assyria</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
	<p>City of Babylon completely destroyed, 692.  Campaign against Arabians in 689.  Murdered by two sons, 681.  Esarhaddon, 681-668.  Great temple builder. Restorer of Babylon. Renowned conqueror. Egypt defeated, Memphis taken, 670. Crowned king of Egypt. Palestine and Tyre submit and pay tribute. Revolt in Egypt quelled, 668-666.</p> <p>Ashurbanipal, 668-626.  Subdued Egypt in 666 and again in 662. The golden age of Assyria. Great library at Nineveh built and inscriptions carefully collected.  Ashurtilili, 626-606, and Sinsharishkun last kings of Assyria.</p> <p>Nabopolassar, 626-605. gained independence of Babylon. Nineveh attacked by Medes in 625 but saved by the Scythians.</p> <p>Nineveh taken by the Medes, allies of Babylonia in 606-605. Went as spoil to Babylonia.</p> <p>Nebuchadrezzar defeated Egyptians at Carchemish, 605. King of Babylon, 605-562. Syria and Assyria came under Babylonia. Rebuilt Babylon. Jerusalem rebelled and captured.</p> <p>Jerusalem again rebelled in 588. Sieged, captured and razed in 586.</p>	<p>Shabatako, 700-691.  Tirhakah, 691-665.</p> <p>Tirhakah fled from the capital 670.</p> <p>Thebes captured by Assyria, 662.  Psamtik, 662-610.  Gains throne and independence.  Scythians bought off at the border.</p> <p>Necho, 610-594.  Megiddo.  Carchemish.</p> <p>Psamtik II, 594-588.</p> <p>Hophra, 588-569.  Army of Egypt sent to relief of Jerusalem defeated.</p>	<p>700</p> <p>630</p> <p>608 605</p> <p>597</p> <p>586</p>

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE
586	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Judah in Exile</i></p> <p>Jerusalem was uninhabitable. The country desolate. Peasants remaining. Inroads made by neighbors. Edom, Arabs and others.</p> <p>Egyptian colonies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Taphanes, Migdol and Memphis. Many attracted by commerce. Jeremiah with these exiles. In 560 all foreigners were expelled from border cities.</li> <li>2. Assuan. Here was a Jewish colony from before 525. A temple. Aramaic papyri. Relations with Jerusalem in 400.</li> </ol> <p>Babylonia. Colony in 597. Great prosperity; splendid culture; considerable freedom; self-government.</p>	<p>Ezek. xl-xlviii. Temple vision in 572. Ezek. xxix. 17-20, appendix, 570. Dt. xxxii. 1-43. "Song of Moses." Job. i-ii. xlii. 7-17. Prose story of Job.</p>
570	Ezekiel prophesying 592-570.	<p>Lev. xi, xvii-xxvi. H. C. Other similar priestly regulations accumulated. Edition of Jeremiah by Baruch. Historical narratives and predictions included. Edition of Isaiah, including historical material; Isa. xxxvi-xxxix. Deuteronomic activity. Second and final edition of I, II Kings. Deuteronomic edition of JE. of the Pentateuch and Josh. i-xii. This united with final edition of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomic edition of Judges, I, II, Samuel completed. Lam. i. v. Ps. xxii, lxxvii, lxxxix, cxxxvii, exilic.</p>
547 to 540	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>The Jewish Community</i></p> <p>Sheehbazzar local governor for Persia in Jerusalem. Permission to return granted by Cyrus. Only small groups at different times accepted. Total in two centuries a little over 42,360.</p>	<p>Isa. xxi. 1-10, xiii-xiv. 23; Jer. i. 2-li. 58; Isa. xl-ly; Hos. i. 10-li. 1; Amos ix. 8b-15; Mic. ii. 12, 13, iv. 6-8; Zeph. ii. 8-11, iii. 8-20. With much more editorial work on the existing books.</p>
539	Sheehbazzar local governor for Persia in Jerusalem. Permission to return granted by Cyrus. Only small groups at different times accepted. Total in two centuries a little over 42,360.	<p>Hag. i. ii. Zech. i-viii. Isa. ix. 1-7, xi. 1-10. Nah. i. 12, 13, 15, ii. 2 (516).</p>
520	Zerubbabel, a royal prince, local governor. Joshua, the high priest, Haggai and Zechariah urge the rebuilding of the temple. Second temple dedicated in 516.	
516	<p>Seventy years of silence. Edomites driven out of their possessions by Nabateans press up into the south of Judah. Jerusalem community, small and mongrel.</p>	

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Babylonia-Assyria</i>		<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>
	<i>Babylonia</i>	<i>Persia</i>	586
	<p>Evil-Marduk, 561-559. Son of Nebuchadnezzar.</p> <p>Nergalissar, 559-555. Brother-in-law of predecessor, whom he murdered.</p> <p>Labashi-Marduk, 555. Ruled nine months and was removed by conspirators.</p> <p>Nabonidus, 555-539. One of the conspirators. A new family. The last king, an antiquarian rather than a statesman.</p> <p>Belshazzar, son of Nabonidus, was prince regent under his father; may have had an official position in Babylon.</p>	<p>Cyrus, king of Anshan, 559. Successfully revolted against Persia, 550. Crowned king of Persia. 547.</p> <p>Conquered Lydia and Aegean Greeks 546.</p> <p>Army of Cyrus. Entered Babylon, 539, under Gobryas, his general. Proclamation.</p>	
	<p><i>Persia</i></p> <p>Cyrus. Persia (559-529). King of Babylon, 539-529.</p>		
	<p>Cambyases, 529-522. Conquered Egypt, 525, destroyed temples, slew the sacred bull.</p> <p>Darius I, 522-486. Insurrections throughout the kingdom. In nineteen campaigns in seven years he was victorious. Reorganized all the empire. Visited Egypt, rebuilt the temples, provided a bull. Invaded Europe. Battle of Marathon.</p>		523
			517
			515



DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE
444	Nehemiah granted leave of absence by Artaxerxes, goes to Jerusalem and builds the wall in 52 days. Opposed by Ammonites, Arabians and Samaritans. Organized the community.	Isa. xxxiv, xxxv, lvi-lxii, lxiii. 1-6. Obadiah.  Malachi. Isa. ii. 2-4, xix. 19-25. Mic. iv. 1-5, vii. 7-20.
432	Nehemiah's second visit to the city. Drove out the foreigners. Prohibited commerce on the Sabbath. Rebuked marriages with foreigners. Organized the treasury. Demanded that the Levites receive their dues.	  Neh. i-vii. 5; lxiii. 4-31. Nehemiah's memoirs. Ezra iv. 8-vi. 16. Aramaic document.
398	Ezra came to Jerusalem in seventh year of Artaxerxes II. Law book read seven days. Feast of booths observed. Covenant to keep the law; divorce court established; 113 cases guilty.	Psalms book No. I (Ps. iii-xli collected). Ezra's law book, which was the nucleus of P.
380	Samaritan schism between 400 and 350.	Enlarged editions of the law code.  Priestly edition of JED. with P. 400-350. P. material includes genealogies, statistics, priestly traditions and institutions, e.g., Lv. i-xvi; Ex. xxv-xxxl. 18; xxxv-xl; vi. 2-vii. 13; xii. 1-20. Gen. i-ii. 4a, v. 1-28, vi. 9-22, ix. 1-7; x. 1-7. Nu. i-x. 28; xv; xvii-xix; xxvi-xxx. Dt. xxxii. 48-52; Josh. xiii. 15-32; ix. 17-21, xiv. 1-5; xv. 1-13; 20-67; etc. Thus Hexateuch completed before 350. Job iii-xlii. 6.
346	Jewish deportation to Egypt. Temple desecrated. Heavy tax.	Ruth. Jonah? Isa. lxiii. 7-lxvi. 21. Many interpretative additions to existing books during the century: e.g., Jer. x. 1-16, xvii. 19-27.
332	Alexander conquers Syria. Generous to Palestine and Samaria.	Joel. Isa. xxiv-xxvii. Apocalypse. Nahum i. 2-10 an apocalyptic acrostic psalm.
321	Judah in the next 40 years changed masters eight times.	
320	Ptolemy I captured the city on the Sabbath 321, and carried Jews captive to Egypt.	
315	Antigonus, a rival general took and held Judah until 301.	Priestly history of the kingdom compiled. I, II, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, after 300.
280	Judah became an Egyptian province and remained so until 198.	Ps. xlii-lxxxix. Collected in Psalm Books II, III.
264	War between Egypt and Syria.	

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Persia</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
<p><i>Greece</i></p> <p>The age of Pericles in Athens. 461-431</p> <p>Aeschylus, 525-446</p> <p>Sophocles, 496-406</p> <p>Euripides, 480-406</p> <p>Socrates, 469-339</p> <p>Plato 427-347</p>	<p>Xerxes I, 486-464.</p> <p>Subdued revolt in Egypt 486.</p> <p>Battles of Thermopylae and Salamis. Plataea, 479. Persians driven out of Europe.</p> <p>Artaxerxes I, 464-424.</p> <p>Kindly disposed.</p> <p>Xerxes II, 424-423.</p> <p>Darius II, 423-404.</p>		<p>490</p> <p>480</p> <p>470</p>
Aristotle 384-322.		Egypt became independent*	410
<p>Philip of Macedon, 359-336.</p> <p>Conquered and organized all Greece by 338 and laid basis for world empire.</p>	Artaxerxes II, 404-358.		
<p>Alexander the Great, 336-323.</p> <p>Battle of Issus, 333, Tyre and Syria conquered, and Alexandria, Egypt, founded, 332. Battle of Arbela, Babylon and Persia conquered.</p> <p>India conquered. Died in Babylon 323. Left vast empire to his generals.</p>	<p>Artaxerxes III, 358-337.</p> <p>Egypt and Phœnicia revolted.</p> <p>Jews defeated and deported to Babylonia and Hyrcania.</p> <p>Temple spoiled.</p> <p>Arses, 337-335.</p> <p>Darius III 335-331.</p>		<p>353</p> <p>346</p>
<p>Conflicts between the generals over authority and boundary lines. Four great divisions, two of interest to Old Testament study</p>	<p><i>Syria</i></p> <p>Seleucus I, 311-281.</p> <p>Antiochus I, 281-261.</p> <p>Antiochus II, 261-245.</p>	<p>Ptolemy I, 322-285.</p> <p>Ptolemy II, 285-247.</p>	<p>322</p>

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE
243	Judah suffered greatly	Septuagint beginning, Pentateuch into Greek. Job xxxii-xxxvii. Speeches of Elihu.
230	Joseph, the taxgatherer, was Egypt's representative until 208. Luxurious, oppressive.	Prov. x-xxiv. Collected. Song of Songs. Jonah. Zechariah ix.-xi. 3 (230). Lam. iii.
218	Syria conquered Palestine, but by battle of Raphia, lost again to Egypt. Jerusalem temple defiled. Jews enslaved. Great suffering.	
208	Hyrcanus, illegitimate son of Joseph, successor to his father until 175.	Zech. xi. 4-17, xiii. 7-9, xii. 1-xiii. 6, xiv. 1-20 (210).
		HEBREW LITERATURE      EXTRA CANONICAL : JEWISH LITERATURE
198	Battle of Banias. Syria gained Palestine. Very lenient to Jews.	Ecclesiastes. Job xxviii. Prov. i-ix, xxx. 1-4, xxx. 5-xxxi. 31. Esther.
175	Jason, a Hellenized Jew, bought the high-priesthood. Onias III, thus deposed, went to Egypt and became priest in a new temple built to Yahweh in Leontopolis.	Ecclesiasticus.
172	Menelaus outbid Jason, and was ordained high priest. Disregarded sanctity of the temple and pro-Grecian. Jason raided the temple.	
170	Antiochus plundered the temple and put a thousand Jews to death.	Apoc. Enochi.-xxxvi.
168	Prohibited circumcision, possessing a copy of the Scriptures, Sabbath observance, and demanded the eating and sacrifice of swines' flesh by all Jews. Altar to Zeus set up in temple.	
167	Maccabean revolt led by Judas, assisted by the Hasidim successful. Syrian armies defeated, 167-165.	Daniel, 165.
165	Temple rededication Dec. 25, 165. Hasidim secede from the war party. Judas continues, gains victories from 163-161, when he is slain.	Ps. lxxiv; lxxxix; xlv. Maccabean.
161	Jonathan, his youngest brother, succeeds as leader, 161-143.	Apoc. Enoch lxxxiii-xc. 161.
143	Simon, an older brother, succeeds and rules, 143-135. Sends an embassy to Rome, and gains important concessions.	Ps. cx. Ps. xc-cl. i. ii. collected. Psalm books IV. V.
141	Appointed king and high-priest of the Jewish community.	Much editorial work done during the preceding century.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Syria</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
	Seleucus II, 245-227.		248
	Seleucus III, 227-224.	Ptolemy III, 247-222.	
	Antiochus III, 224-187. Conquered Palestine and northern Syria in 198. Crossed into Greece but driven out by Roman army. Then at Magnesia in 190, in Asia Minor, was defeated, and lost territory and prestige.	Ptolemy IV, 222-205. Ptolemy V, 205-181.	
	Antiochus IV, 187-164. War against Egypt, 171-168, successful. Roman senate interfered with his activity. The victory at Pydna in Macedonia in 168, had made Rome the first power in the world.	Ptolemy VI, 181. Ptolemy VII, 181-161. Weak kings, now under tutelage of Rome.	198 170
	Antiochus V, 164-162.		165
	Demetrius, 162-150.		
	Alexander Balas, 150-145.		143
	Demetrius II, 145-136.		136

DATE	HEBREW HISTORY	HEBREW LITERATURE	
		HEBREW LITERATURE	EXTRA CANONICAL : JEWISH LITERATURE
135	John (Hyrcanus I), his son, succeeded him in office, 135-105.	Old Testament canon virtually closed by 100 B.C.	Twelve Patriarchs. Tobit.
100		Greek translation (Septuagint) of most of them completed.	Sybilline Oracles. iii. 97-818. Apoc. Enoch. xci.-civ,
64			I Maccabees. Psalms of Solomon. Apoc. Enoch. xxxvii.-lxx. Judith. II Maccabees. Susanna, Bel and the Dragon. The Three Holy Children.
40			Wisdom of Solomon. Jubilees. Slavonic Enoch.



CONTEMPORARY HISTORY			DATE
<i>Small Nations</i>	<i>Syria</i>	<i>Egypt and Nile Valley</i>	
	Antiochus VI, 136-126.		130 126 100
			64 63 50
			40



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